

The Lonely End of the Pink:
Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island

A Thesis

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The Lonely End of the Pink

DEDICATION

So the Story Goes.

Downie's *The Lonely End of the Rink* is about his experiences.
His experiences as a goalie on the pond as a child.
The Lonely End of the Pink is, like Gord's, about experience.

It is about my experience.
My experiences which I can't fully describe.
As one phrase falls on paper it is tugged away.
Making room for another attempt to describe.

For me, I sometimes feel beaten by that 'sweet deke'.
and with each shot I take I'm never really sure where it will go.
The puck rebounds and rounds, only to be whacked again.

My experiences and my representations always tugged, pulled, checked, and swayed.

As I picture his dad's fist in the air, I am reminded that the song is his way thanking his dad.
Then I suddenly feel connected, less singled out.

The Lonely End of the Pink is for everyone whom I wish to thank.
But it is also a reminder and a lesson.
A reminder that I do sometimes feel lonely
and sometimes I wish I could join the 'rush as the season builds'.
Sometimes I do wish I'm not that 'different' team member and not outnumbered in the rink.
Sometimes I wish I could shake that feeling of having no room at the lonely end of the pink.

First and foremost, this is dedicated to my son and my wife. Luka: I wrote this while you napped and I loved hearing your footsteps running up the hall, for I knew it was play time – the typing could stop! Kim: your patience and support throughout this process was amazing and much appreciated.

This is also dedicated to my extended family and my colleagues; you've supported me and taught me much.

Finally this is also dedicated to Mr. Tim Murphy who supported as I began this journey and supported me during one of my most challenging times as a teacher.

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ABSTRACT

While men make up less than 10% of the primary school teaching positions in Prince Edward Island, researchers are at odds as to the importance of increasing this male presence within primary settings. What is clear is that the experiences of male primary teachers are altogether unexplored in Prince Edward Island.

Semi-structured interviews and follow-up conversations were used to explore the experiences of 13 male primary teachers. Within these experiences, evidence emerged as to why so few men choose to teach our youngest students. However, *The Lonely End of the Pink* has a much broader purpose. This study sought to understand the challenges these men face so that support for our male primary teachers could be fostered within our school system. In exploring these experiences, a complex truth emerged: the experience of being a man and teaching at the primary level is an experience laden with tensions. Many of these tensions are linked to stereotypes that are deeply ingrained in societal and school cultures; sometimes these tensions are curiously unbeknownst to the men who teach at the primary level.

The findings of this study suggest that participants had largely similar experiences to those of men from other locales. They further suggest that a reflexive influence is at play. This reflexive influence implies that the participants' very interpretations of their own experiences may be skewed by their limited awareness of the tensions that surround their work. Poetry submitted by the author reinforces this notion: that our awareness of the tensions that surround us influences our teaching, our identity as teachers, our professional relationships, and our personal experiences. This research is ultimately about supporting the men who teach at the primary level so that they can focus on what is most important – educating our youngest students.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Lonely End of the Pink, a masters' thesis, is an exploration of the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 levels in Prince Edward Island (PEI). This document first introduces this research topic, then presents a literature review related to challenges and opportunities faced by men who teach at the primary levels in PEI. An overview of the research processes that were employed is presented and then, an in-depth analysis of the documented experiences of male primary teachers is provided. Finally, a discussion and a collection of recommendations are proposed to the education community and society as a whole.

Problem Statement

According to Drudy (2006) and Smith (2004) about 80% of the K-3 workforce in Western societies are women. Figures recently released by the Prince Edward Island Teachers Federation (PEITF) indicated that in Prince Edward Island there are approximately 2060 elementary teachers. Within schools identified as K-3 or K-6, only 80 men are employed as opposed to 550 women (PEITF). Men therefore working in K-3 and K-6 categorized schools make up approximately 12% of the teaching force. Since these numbers do not include those schools identified as K-8 or K-12 (a third of the schools in the Eastern School District alone) and the fact that many men at the K-6 level are often found at the upper elementary grades (Ashley, 2003; Carrington, 2002), the 12% figure is surely smaller. An informal survey of posted staff lists on Prince Edward Island (PEI) school websites indicated female teachers outnumber their male colleagues by an even wider margin; occupying approximately 93% of K-3 classroom teaching assignments. In conducting this study I was able to identify only 12 male primary teachers on

contract with a school board in Prince Edward Island. Regardless of what number is actually most accurate, what is obvious is that men are heavily outnumbered by women at the K-3 levels in PEI.

Current research in this area portrays complex, evolving, and often contradictory explanations as to whether more male primary teachers are needed and why so few men are working with younger children within schools (Ashley 2003; Foster & Newman 2005; Lahelma, 2000; Mills & Keddie 2005; Skelton 2001). Yet since the mid-nineties demand for male teachers in Western primary schools has grown; due in part because of the view that more men are needed to address concerns over boys' achievement (Cushman, 2006). However, it's worth noting that at no point in history have male teachers ever outnumbered women at the primary level and therefore some wonder why there's a call for more male teachers now (Harnett & Lee, 2003).

Regardless of one's position regarding the need for more male primary teachers, what is under-researched is the male K-3 teacher experience itself (Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008). New understandings related to men teaching at the primary level may have implications for parents, administrators, school boards, governments, and ultimately and most importantly, implications for learning and teaching.

Background and Need

Important research related to gender theory suggested that certain hegemonic expectations, such as views and beliefs about what it means to 'be a man,' often rarely align with any lived male experience or persona (Connell, 1987). Similarly the "culture of the primary school sets up certain expectations of teachers; it prescribes and proscribes certain ways of thinking and behaving. However, this narrow essentialist view of teaching is alien to men's

normative experience” (Foster & Newman, 2005, p. 354). As a result male primary teachers find themselves, often unwittingly, feeling compelled to engage in complex identity negotiations within a largely female-dominated world where they are expected to live up to certain gender defined expectations (Foster & Newman, 2005).

Research related to men doing ‘woman’s work’ in Prince Edward Island may be needed because of the province’s unique social heritage (Weale, 1992) and because of existing gendered perceptions and understandings (Connell, 1995 as cited in Roulston & Mills, 2000). This work may also be necessary because of beliefs regarding men who teach young children (Skelton, 2003), views and beliefs that will be explored in greater detail within the literature review for this study.

Ultimately, if stakeholders are to promote or to dismiss the need for more male educators and to perhaps better support those men who currently teach at the K-3 levels, then understanding the lived experience of these men is fundamental.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island. Current research suggests that most men find teaching at the primary level positive and rewarding; while some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain (Jones, 2007). This study explores these conflicting views by considering the experiences of men who teach at the primary level in PEI. In exploring the experiences of these men, the opportunities and challenges related to being a man and teaching at the primary grades was examined.

Methodology, Research Questions, and Inquiry Approach

This section briefly introduces the methodology and methods used in this study. A more detailed presentation can be found in Chapter Three.

Methodology. This qualitative study explored the experiences of male primary teachers on PEI by employing semi-structured interviews and conversations. The research unfolded in two phases: first an in-depth initial interview was conducted (November & December, 2011) and then participants were invited to participate in follow-up conversations (January, 2012).

Aside from gaining understandings related to the male primary teacher experience another ‘bi-product’ of this study was an exploration of the nature of reflexivity and how reflexivity either actively or passively influences research participants (Schwandt, 2007). Many of the challenges listed in the literature review were, for me, largely unknown concepts that initially did not register or resonate with my interpretations of my own teaching experience. It wasn’t until my knowledge regarding the complexities of male primary teaching was expanded that I realized I was experiencing, or perhaps began to experience, challenges similar to those documented in previous studies. At some level, as a result of ‘coming to know’, I began to question my own teaching and began to be more reflective of my experience as a primary teacher. The more I researched the more aware I became of the issues male primary teachers face and as such, my increased awareness exposed truths about my own interpretations of my experiences as a teacher. My increasing awareness influenced my interpretations – reflexivity’s role in this research was recognized. As a result of my realization, that I was being affected by the research, I began to feel that follow-up conversations with participants were needed to explore reflexive influences that they might be experiencing through their participation in this study. I felt it was important to

gauge the awareness of the issues that confront the participants themselves, doing so would permit me to explore whether their experiences are influenced by their knowledge about the challenges and opportunities before them.

During the follow-up conversations, current research regarding men as primary teachers was presented (Appendix A) and the participants were given an opportunity to respond. The follow-up conversations were therefore used to explore how the journey from limited awareness to heightened awareness may have affected, or will affect, these men.

This added piece was important to include in the study because as a primary teacher I observed that, in learning about the challenges and opportunities faced by men, I became more reflective about my experiences. I also observed certain nuances and interactions with colleagues that may have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Research questions. The following questions highlight the aims of this study:

1. What opportunities and challenges do men experience when teaching at the primary level in Prince Edward Island?
2. How are the experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island similar to those experiences reported in the literature review?
3. To what degree are men aware of the challenges and the opportunities before them?
4. How does an increased awareness of the challenges and opportunities before male primary teachers affect the interpretations of the participants' own experiences?

Gender and reflexivity as a lens for inquiry. Gosse, Parr, and Allison (2008) claimed that gender alone is an insufficient lens for understanding the male experience. The reality is, that when studying a group of individuals, individuality trumps preconceived definitions of male and

female. This is not to say that this study is free from such binaries: binaries play a role in this study and are particularly important when we consider how young children, through social learning, identify with their teachers. This study, in exploring the lived experience of these men, acknowledges that, although individuality is important and ultimately represents and defines who we are, the very nature of this work presents a lens that deliberately sets up an atmosphere where binaries are unavoidable – in that this study is ultimately about men working in a workplace comprised mostly of women. However, with sensitivity to individuality in mind, it is also important to acknowledge Skelton's (2007) assertion that education researchers should focus less on issues that are gender specific and more on the challenges of teachers in general. Skelton and Gosse, Parr, and Allison's views combined with the need to present a binary filled atmosphere represent a reoccurring theme within this study: the push and pull of competing messages. In light of this tension, this study embraces and grapples with both perspectives by considering individuality while being cognisant that gender binaries exist and underpin many of the themes within this work. These themes, often manifested through stereotyping, are born because of binary definitions that are presented throughout the literature on this topic and permeate school culture.

Explaining and interpreting experiences is a complex process involving numerous influencing factors. Gender defines individuals from 'within', through one's own definitions of gender. Gender also defines individuals from 'without' through other people's beliefs about male and female norms. Individuals cannot escape the influence that exists where gender definitions compete and are in conflict, such interaction sets up expectations of ourselves and of others.

In the same way that gender influences our experience, reflexivity also influences and

informs our understandings of our own experiences. Experience presents us with an accepted view of 'the way it is' yet as we come to know more about our own experiences and locales, through reflexivity, we redefine our expectations – our experiential lens takes on a fluid characteristic. As such, considering both gender and reflexivity as influencing factors in this study is necessary.

In exploring the discourse related to men teaching primary students, it's important to recognize a reflexive and gender dynamic at play. There are three features at work: (a) there is an internal perception held by men about their own teaching; (b) there is an external perception held by all other groups about men who teach at the primary level; and (c) where these perceptions meet, we see the two factors 'dancing' and evolving while continually shaping experiences. It seems from a personal standpoint, at least initially, the more aware we are that others see us differently the more uncomfortable we feel about our own teaching. Therefore managing reflexivity was an important consideration in the research design of this study and is addressed in greater detail in the methods and methodology chapter.

Features and Structure of this Thesis

Because it was impossible for me to separate my day-to-day work life from my other role as a researcher, I decided to present this study in two ways. First this study is presented in a traditional sense containing the usual chapters found in master's level theses but it also contains a poetry component that has many functions: a) a literary guide; b) a data source; c) a tool to facilitate discussion; and d) an avenue for reflection. The formats and functions are outlined below.

Standard thesis. The following list outlines the standard features of this thesis.

1. Chapter one serves as an introduction to the study.
2. Chapter two presents a literature review related to male primary teachers. It highlights some of the key themes emerging from the literature, presenting both opportunities and challenges that men experience in teaching at the primary level.
3. Chapter three outlines in greater detail the methodology and methods to be used in this research and outlines the analysis process.
4. Chapter four highlights key findings.
5. Chapter five features a discussion outlining conclusions and recommendations.

Poetry feature. The poetry feature is used to guide readers as various topics unfold in the literature review; presenting the reader with glimpses into how themes from the literature manifest themselves in real life experience. The poetry was also a way to include my own experiences as a primary teacher; as such the poetry is included in the data analysis. Many of the poems included in the literature review constitute some but not all of the analyzed poems. A second pool of poetry, the poetry that appears in the final chapter, is not included as data but takes on a more reflective tone and role where I attempted to make sense of the things that I was learning from this study. This second pool of poetry allowed me to drive discussion and to sort through the tangle of messages that emerged from this study.

Summary

This introduction provided an overview of this study which explored the experiences of male primary teachers in PEI. A number of items were presented in this introduction such as: related background information, key questions, the study's purpose, and an evaluation of the need for this study. General details related to methodology were presented and issues related to

reflexivity and gender were also introduced. All of these items will be explored in greater detail throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review

Male teachers in primary schools were recently metaphorically characterized as an 'endangered species' (Abraham, 2010). Male primary teachers are indeed rare in Western schools but why is this so? What challenges have made 'survival' difficult? What specifically are the challenges and opportunities that male primary teachers face? Are these experiences worth consideration or even in need of exploration? In understanding their experiences are we able to explain why so few men choose this sector of teaching? This literature review attempts to answer some of the questions above, however, the literature presented below is full of conflicting and competing views. In presenting one perspective a contradictory notion often complicates the presented topics. These contradictory positions create a conceptual 'space' often attributed by binaries that are linked to stereotypes and to fluid expectations of men and of primary teaching.

Topics explored in this literature review include: (a) demographics related to male primary teaching; (b) the male primary teaching experience highlighting the challenges and opportunities associated with men teaching in primary schools; (c) a collection of discourses related to male primary teaching and about the men who teach at this level; and (d) the complexities associated with the expectation that men should be role models for children and how this expectation affects men's identities as teachers and/or individuals.

Demographics Related to Male Primary Teachers

The number of male primary teachers is very low when compared to their female colleagues. Those who champion gender-balanced teaching faculties have an uphill battle; the factors that deter men from becoming primary classroom teachers are numerous.

The odds of increasing the percentage of male primary teachers in Western schools beyond 20% of the workforce appear slim (Hasse, 2008). This task is very difficult for many reasons: First, children rarely encounter male elementary teachers and are instead usually taught by women; causing an early internalization that primary education is a female-dominated profession - a view that stays with some students as they mature (DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997 as cited in Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008). For example, a study of over 1000 graduates found that young men believed women should teach at the primary level because of their nurturing tendencies (Skelton, 2009). Secondly, young men considering entering teacher training are deterred when they become aware that teaching is viewed by some groups within society as a low status profession (Carrington, 2002). Also, between the 1970's and the mid-nineties the number of women attending post-secondary institutions in Canada has surpassed the number of men; a ratio that has shifted from 1:3 to 5:3 (Trends in Higher Education, 2007). The ratio of women to men is likely more pronounced in traditional female-oriented fields such as early learning and nursing. Compounding this trend is high attrition rates among men in BEd. programs (Gosse, Parr, Allison, 2008); A fourth factor is the fact that some male primary teachers leave and seek employment at other grade levels or in other fields (Foster & Newman, 2005; Cushman, 2005). Finally, many men currently teaching at the primary levels leave teaching because of four main challenges: (a) issues related to status and salary; (b) various challenges faced by men when working within a female-dominated area of teaching; (c) fear of potential abuse allegations by students (Cushman, 2005; Parr & Gosse, 2012) and; (d) to a lesser extent, the fear of workplace sexual harassment accusations (Francis, 2001). As more men leave the field, the original deterring factor in this cycle (children internalizing primary teaching as a woman's occupation) is

fuelled even further.

The listed factors and the deep challenges experienced by men who work within our primary schools all contribute to the low number of male primary teachers. Altering this phenomenon is challenging but not impossible. Understanding the experiences of these male primary teachers may help to reverse the trends highlighted above.

Male Primary Teacher Experience

Overall, men who teach at the K-3 level have positive experiences; most enjoy teaching and working with young children and benefit from supportive and caring professional relationships within their workplaces (Cushman, 2005). Many wonder why gender is even an issue in the context of teaching (Foster & Newman, 2005).

A man's or woman's world? At first glance primary schools appear completely 'feminine'. However, if we look more closely, men can be found working alongside their female colleagues at the primary level. Some have challenged the notion that primary schools are 'feminine domains' and suggest primary schools are not feminine at all but rather more conducive to a man's way of being (Hasse, 2008). Despite these claims some men find the experience all together uncomfortable and uncertain (Jones, 2007).

The uncomfortable and uncertain experience, as described by Jones, exists perhaps unknowingly for many men. Even before careers are started, some preservice teachers embark on their journey at becoming primary teachers unaware of the level and/or extent of 'femininity' at the primary levels (Skelton, 2007) causing an uncomfortable awakening for some. However, characterizing primary teaching as a 'feminine' domain, a characterization found in many discourses related to primary teaching (Skelton, 2007), presents complications. Even in

suggesting primary teaching as feminine, one is forced to assume that there exists a one-femininity-fits-all teaching approach at work in primary schools. Yet there is no clearly defined feminine box in which all female teachers can fit (Luk-Fong, 2010). To characterize primary teaching as having become ‘feminized’ would mean that all female teachers are lumped into a single feminine category. These assumptions cannot be made about teaching, one cannot assume all individuals fit a single gender specific teaching mode and that teaching prescribes to a binary structure. Since no single feminine or masculine definition truly exists then perhaps there is no his-and-hers teaching style or domain, as such society cannot assign either gender to any specific area of teaching.

As noted, some researchers would suggest that primary teaching is not feminine at all, and that primary teaching is in fact more masculine, favouring “masculinised modes of operation” (Arnot & Miles, 2005; Blackmore 1999; Lingard & Douglas 1999 as cited in Hasse, 2008, p. 599), and that school settings host teachers of both genders who employ “various strategies by which men/boys and women/girls attempt to achieve masculinity or femininity” (Francis & Skelton, 2001, p. 12). These tendencies are outlined in Table 1. Such attributes are misleading because the attributes are overgeneralized; they are stereotypically presented as binaries and do not consider the complexness of individuality (Luk-Fong, 2010). However Arnot and Miles (2005) suggested that these masculine influences are less about individuals and are more systemic, where Western school systems are masculine systems by design, where there is an emphasis on standards instead of structure and where systems are competitive and performance-driven. Education systems where, Hasse (2008) explains, women in large numbers are forced to adopt masculine behaviours thus creating the illusion that primary teaching is a feminine

occupation. As such, men seem to hold a great deal of power over women – a power differential that could make up for the gender imbalance among primary staffs.

Nevertheless, such power balancing goes largely unnoticed by male teachers themselves: “nor is he aware that his way of being is in accordance with the masculine school system and so he is likely to carry greater privilege and power than what may be so for a female teacher” (Hasse, 2008, p.605).

Table 1

Masculine/feminine attributes in Western society

Masculine	Feminine
Rationality	Emotion
Strength	Frailty
Aggression	Care
Competition	Cooperation
Mind	Body
Science	Nature/Arts
Activity	Passivity
Independence	Dependence

Note. Adapted from “Men teachers and the construction of heterosexual masculinity in the classroom,” by B. Francis and C. Skelton, 2001, Sex Education, p.11.

However, it may be important to embrace the fact that primary teaching is neither solely feminine nor is it solely masculine. Rather, schools are made up of individuals who mold the primary sector in their own way: where traditional binary definitions of masculinity and femininity simply do not apply because all individuals fall within a gender spectrum (Luk-Fong,

2010). Therefore I do not wish to position primary teaching within any gender binary or definition. I am more comfortable simply acknowledging that female teachers vastly outnumber male teachers and as a result there is the perception that primary teaching is a feminine domain (Arnot & Miles, 2005). For the purpose of this study, 'the feminine domain' shall, as Harnet and Lee (2003) suggested, be defined simply as a gender imbalance on school faculties.

Isolating experiences and the challenges of collaboration. In light of the gender staff imbalance in primary schools some men do find primary teaching an isolating experience (Thornton, 1999). Kauppinen-Toropainen and Lammi's research (as cited in Smith, 2004) suggested men struggle to integrate into female-dominated work teams and Williams (1989) noted that, in the context of nursing, men feel excluded from social networks occupied by women and as a result, men have acknowledged that they feel lonely working within female 'dominated' workplaces, finding themselves personally and professionally isolated (Mulholland & Hansen, 2003). These feelings of isolation prompted some men to reach out to other men within their workspaces: "these men sought out others as a sort of refuge or "refuelling" in masculinity" (Williams, 1995, p. 78).

Sharp Escape

Quick hellos, 'nice day,' small talk about weather.

I hear, but do not participate:

"That skirt looks so nice, where did you get it?"

I would have rather talked about the Habs and Bruins,
but I'm outnumbered and don't want to interrupt.

In my room now, sharpening pencils, again I hear others in the hall: "I love that book, *Hugs with a Kiss*, the kids love it!"

Everyone seems to agree. Do they ALL really love it?

I wonder a while, I know that book. I hate it.

Instead of socializing with female colleagues, men engaged with activities that distanced themselves from ‘women’s spaces,’ activities such as spending recesses with students or busying themselves within their own classrooms. Those men ‘refuelling’ their masculinities would typically interact with male principals or male custodians, those who are generally the ‘other’ men on primary teaching faculties (Smith, 2004).

Formal collaborative arrangements may be more inviting for men (Thornton, 1999), but this is not to say that all men ‘hide’ from social settings involving female colleagues. Obviously many men benefit from and enjoy informal interaction where spontaneous collaborative practice unfolds. However, men have expressed the importance of collaborating with other men, where men can benefit from meaningful discussions about their experiences. Such opportunities are rare especially where one man finds himself as the lone male on staff (Mulholland & Hansen, 2003).

Cushman (2005) noted that some men avoided confiding in their female colleagues because those men believed their colleagues would view them as weak or not ‘manly’ enough to deal with problems. As such the men would potentially burden themselves with overcoming professional challenges on their own. The ‘pulling’ from ‘women’s spaces’, either voluntary or subconsciously, blended with limited opportunity for collaboration certainly presents a challenge for some men and will likely have implications for teaching.

Simply stereotypes or symbolic violence? Many researchers have demonstrated that stereotypes about male primary teachers exist in society. Researchers have also demonstrated that these stereotypes also exist within schools and are often perpetrated by female teachers. Sometimes these stereotypes are very hurtful for men; other times these stereotypes are, for some men, benign; sometimes the stereotypes are embraced and reinforced by male teachers.

My Neighbour

I've met my neighbour once.
He seems nice.
In casual conversation, I learned his girls go to my school.
He, in turn, learned I am a grade 1 teacher at their school.
We haven't really talked since.

Is it because...

of coincidence with nothing more to it?
he thinks I'm some sort of creep?
of the party my step daughter threw?

“Men taking up teaching posts in the lower primary sector, particularly in the early years, are seen, at best, as ‘unusual’ or ‘odd’ and, at worst, as potential threats to the children” (Carrington, 2002, p. 301). “Male teachers of young children, in particular, are not only construed as potential pedophiles but also depicted as gay. As a consequence, male teachers are often looked upon with suspicion because of the prevalence of homophobia in our society” (Carrington & Skelton, 2003, p. 259).

The ‘threat to children’ view is largely a derivative of the media focusing on isolated, yet high profile, sexual abuse cases where male teachers have abused young children (Mills, Hasse, & Charlton, 2008). Despite isolated and very rare reports of sexual abuse, parents remain wary of male primary teachers (Skelton, 2007). As Smith (2004) explained this does affect male teachers:

The literature, interviews, and media discourse all concur that male primary teachers face significant difficulties and disadvantages because they are often regarded by society as being risky and sexually deviant. Regardless of whether these suspicions are made explicit or remain implicit, it is clear that they impact enormously on the lives of male primary teachers. Such perceptions result in constant suspicion and surveillance about their behaviour and sexuality and sometimes result in their position becoming untenable (p. 5).

Odd Ball?

In September I thought I was cool, part of the crowd, 'in'
I read *The Right Kind of Man*
Now I ask, am I an odd ball?

Even within the workforce, where one might expect a greater understanding about the men who teach young children, stereotypical views are common. As noted, some female colleagues view male primary teachers as strange, odd, and very feminine (Jones, 2006) and have called into question the masculinity of their male colleagues (Carrington, 2002). Curiously the same women when asked about their desired male colleague described them as: enthusiastic about working with children; macho (strong hegemonic masculinity); and team-oriented with a heightened sense of humour (Jones, 2003). Would these women fail to recognize their desired male colleague among them simply because 'he' is a primary teacher and by default carry with him the perceived baggage or labels that these women associate with male primary teachers? This 'desired man' suggests that some women expect their male colleagues to act certain ways. Jones (2007) suggested that, in contexts where men are expected to act a certain way, women hold a great deal of power over men because not all men will be able to live up to the expectations of their female colleagues.

Class Profile

Every year we do a class profile.
List all those who are serviced...
Counseling, EAL, ENIP, Resource
Reading Recovery...Reading Recovery: 6. 6?

Seems a high number?
What do they think?
Am I, in their eyes, one of those?
One of those needing taken care of?

Many researchers have documented widely held views that female teachers believe their male colleagues need to be ‘looked after’ or are in constant need of assistance. This perception, not surprisingly, frustrates many male primary teachers (Skelton, 1991; Skelton, 2009; Smedley & Pepperell, 2000; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003). Although many male teachers do not feel gender is an issue for them as individual teachers (Smedley & Perperell, 2000), men do feel that gender is a wider professional issue because this ‘attending to’ by others does indeed occur (Skelton, 2007).

In an atmosphere where men feel that they are ‘being attended to’ by their female colleagues, male primary teachers become more aware of the role that their gender plays within their work life. As a result men sometimes embrace the advantages presented to them because of their gender; positioning themselves as unique and needed, and as a way to gain credibility in the eyes of their female colleagues (Francis, 2001). Some studies indicated that men fully expected to capitalize on professional opportunities because their gender made them unique among primary faculties (Skelton, 1991; Thornton & Bricheno, 2000). However, some men experienced discomfort because of their gender (Skelton, 2009) and therefore many men become “irritated/annoyed/disappointed at being seen as ‘special’ or being expected to be a ‘role model’” (Skelton, 2007).

Some men teachers do have to focus on their gender because it is constantly being attended to by others. This entails being seen as disciplinarians; assumed to be good at and interested in sports; regarded as having a heightened sense of humour; seen as being incompetent and needing looking after. All of these ways of being positioned resulted in the men teachers becoming irritated or annoyed at having ‘appropriate male traits’ imposed upon them (Skelton, 2007, p. 684).

My Classroom

In my classroom I am always the only adult.
I rarely have EA's or admin.

I forget the last time I had constructive feedback.
I don't remember the last time I've been evaluated...
in another school maybe?

Perhaps I should check my file.

Gosse, Parr, and Allison (2008) presented the idea of symbolic violence in school and suggested men are indeed sometimes victims of such violence. Symbolic violence is not about physical violence but is rather a quiet passive under-the-surface violence where victims are alienated and/or demoralized. Such violence in the context of male primary teachers exists in the form of implicit, inactive, and/or subconscious policing of men at the primary level. This policing is perhaps born of beliefs backed by stereotypical views about male teachers at the primary level. This occurs when men break the 'unwritten code' which hints that men should not enter primary teaching, the resulting difficulties often amounts to situations where men are left ignored, deprived of knowledge, and without mentoring (Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008).

It appears that the need to address this issue holds credence. The policing and 'attending to,' as described by Skelton, appears widespread: "all of the participants recounted instances of male role stereotyping, particularly by their female colleagues, and resultant expectations of them" (Cushman, 2005, p. 234). As such, many men, in working with young children, feel as if they need to act differently to fulfil defined expectations set by their female colleagues (Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008). Cushman stressed that "if we are to successfully address the issues confronting males in schools, we need also to investigate the extent to which female teachers

perpetuate male and female stereotypes” (2005, p. 234).

Men, by playing into expected roles, sometimes reinforce gender defined stereotypes (Cushman, 2005). The danger of reinforcing stereotypes is that the lines between fact and fiction sometimes become blurred. Ludowyke (2001, as cited in Cushman 2005) suggested that male gender stereotyping provokes stereotypical behaviour among teachers which not only reinforces these stereotypes but also solidifies expectations within school cultures. All of the participants in Ludowyke’s study shared evidence that male teachers were frequently assigned the role of addressing the needs of difficult children. This is one example (male teacher as expected disciplinarian) that illustrates the stereotypical expectations that are perhaps deeply engrained within schools.

Male teachers who assume the role of disciplinarian, either by choice or because of cultural norm, find themselves confronted by an interesting pedagogical and cultural challenge. Where male teachers take on more demanding students, and are forced to adopt more rigid teaching practices, those 'looking in' from the 'outside' may find it difficult to see anything other than a disciplinarian (Cushman, 2005). “Boys’ over-representation in misbehaviour and under-achievement stakes could partly reflect the more rigid teaching strategies that are at times employed by male teachers who find their classes weighted by more challenging students” (Cushman, 2005, p. 235). To suggest male teachers are better disciplinarians is “based on essentialist thought and presumes that male teachers teach differently to females” (Smith, 2004, p. 6). This “has been effectively challenged by gender theorists including those in education” (Skelton, 2007, p. 688). Francis and Skelton (2001) further argued that teaching differences are highly individualized and not gender specific.

To summarize, researchers have demonstrated that some male primary teachers are victims of the stereotyping; such as being pressured to fulfil externally held expectations of them. Other researchers have provided evidence that many men embrace these stereotypes or unwittingly reinforce stereotyping. It has also been demonstrated that, in some cases, this stereotyping can lead to subtle violence known as symbolic violence. Finally other researchers suggest that stereotypes are engrained within school cultures and are therefore difficult to challenge and to reverse.

Men's work and tasks. Each school has its own defining culture; engrained in some school cultures we find defined roles and set expectations for staff members. Sometimes these are rooted in stereotypes sometimes they are meeting a practical need within schools. In exploring the experiences of male primary teachers, researchers have discovered deliberate and consequential labelling of some activities and assignments within schools as 'men's work'.

This idea of 'men's work' within a female-dominated workplace, or as Smith (2004) alluded to as the 'manly' tasks within schools, is largely unexplored and under researched but is not without precedence. Many believe men are best suited for assignments related to physical education and technology because men are more task-oriented and utilitarian (Sargent, 2000). Also, men are often assigned to the highest grades within buildings (Ashley, 2003; Carrington, 2002). Sometimes these tasks arise out of practical necessity others are more forced.

Examples of the extra duties they experience include attending most of the school excursions and camps to meet the required ratio of accompanying males and getting a disproportionate number of male children in their classes because of the increasing requests from parents for their sons to have a male teacher (Smith, 2004, p. 6.).

Sex Ed.

Sex Ed? By default, I teach it...
Women are not supposed to teach the boys, it's an extra class in June.
I don't mind, the boys enjoy it, they'd rather this than algebra in June.

Up You Go

It's Friday, a tricky day is underway.
Lots planned, heavy on the management side.
Knock on door.
"Can I borrow your teacher?"
In the hall, pulled aside I learn of my future.
I'm very happy, I'm where I want to be.
But I know my Grade 1 assignment is ending.
I learn I'm upstairs with the Grade 3's.
I wonder...
other than the staffing numbers is there more to my reassignment.

However, not all men embrace these extra male-only tasks and challenge such stereotyping. Unfortunately, those men who defy requests to do 'men's work' may, in the eyes of some colleagues, be viewed as lacking certain types of hegemonic masculine traits (Burn, 2002 as cited in Cushman, 2005; King, 1998). This fuels those stereotypical views that suggest male primary teachers are somehow weak.

Activities recognized as being 'manly' and grades or assignments perceived as best suited for men, all continue to contribute to the stereotyping experienced by men. As with other stereotyping described in this literature review, sometimes men themselves embrace and reinforce these stereotypes by embracing 'manly' tasks in schools.

Discourses Related to Male Primary Teaching

Male primary teachers sometimes find themselves within influencing discourses that are beyond their control (Woodward, 2002 as cited in Jones, 2008). "The public discourse about male primary teachers inevitably impacts on them as they construct their professional and personal

identities. This discourse constructs and reconstructs varied and contradictory stereotypes” (Skelton, 2001, p. 1). These discourses are varied, ranging from status to nurturing children to more general discourses related to the need for more men in primary schools.

Status of primary teaching. Status appears to be one major deterrent preventing more men from being recruited into primary teaching (Cushman, 2007; Skelton, 2009; Thomas, 2006). Understanding status requires researchers to consider a wide array of concepts including: tokenism, history, pay, career span, and respect for the teaching profession in general. Perceived views on the status of teaching, is one challenge for many teachers and men do identify status as a major barrier to joining the teaching force and a contributing factor of discomfort within the primary field (Thomas, 2006). Public perception regarding male primary teachers does influence job satisfaction and performance (Cushman, 2005).

Dressing Room # 8

Off the ice late, lots of whistles, the clock went slowly.
After the game: I drive a beer into me, hustle my gear into my bag.

“What’s your rush?”
“20 six-year-olds rushing at me in the morning is my rush”
“How hard can it be? Give them a toy and teach the ABC’s!”

With that the door closes behind me.
Laughter fades and is replaced by the hum of the Zamboni.
It’s late, tomorrow is going to come too soon.
They partied on.

Even before men enter their teaching training, many men feel their status is threatened as friends and family have questioned their decision to pursue teaching (Smith, 2004), partly because teaching primary students is sometimes viewed as an extension of child care and therefore ‘woman’s work’ by design (Skelton, 2002). In some studies, public perception about the

status of primary teaching is influenced by the belief that primary teaching is babysitting and a belief that the intellectual requirements for the job are low (Cushman, 2005).

Teaching is often a 'second choice' career of men (Smith, 2004) and many men pondered a variety of career options instead of teaching (Mullholland & Hansen, 2003). Williams and Villemez (1993) noted that most men never intended to teach within a female-dominated profession. They claim that "the majority of men seem to enter female-dominated occupations, not through a revolving door, but rather through a 'trapdoor' - most were not seeking such entry" (as cited in Smith, 2004, p.4).

The status issue related to teaching also has historical links. Harnet and Lee (2003), with regards to the United Kingdom, wrote:

Teaching was an attractive career for many working class women. It offered them a measure of independence and a respectable position amongst the employment that was available for them... For men, on the other hand, there were greater opportunities for working class boys with some education towards the end of the nineteenth century. As job opportunities increased, teaching as a career became less attractive to many men... What we can see from the historical record up to this time in England and Wales is that elementary teaching is viewed as, and in fact is, a role for women rather than men. (p. 78).

In Canada a similar history unfolded. According to The Canadian Encyclopedia (nd.): boys learned manual labour skills that were suited for factories and farming, skills that were in high demand at the times, while women learned skills more closely in line with home economics and nurturance; skills that are viewed by many as the skills best suited for education:

While the proper sphere for women was considered the home, young single women came to be viewed as ideal teachers for younger children who could benefit from their supposedly inherent nurturing qualities. Women teachers were poorly paid and were supervised by male officials who saw themselves as the real educators. Even in the later 20th century, many of the earlier patterns remain unchanged. The history of education has therefore been quite different for males

and females. (“History of Education,” nd., Minority-Language Education section, para. 5)

During the mid-twentieth century, it was a societal *faux pas* for women to make more than their husbands (Tennant, 2011). As such, women were drawn to lower paying occupations such as teaching (Harnett & Lee, 2003). Fortunately teaching is no longer viewed as such a low salary occupation in PEI. Today, beginning teachers are paid between \$41,000 and \$53,000 and enjoy a range of benefits including health insurance and pension benefits (Prince Edward Island Teachers’ Federation, 2010). When compared to national average income, The Conference Board of Canada (2011) suggests that the average individual income was approximately \$31,000 in 2008.

Status seems to be less of an issue for seasoned teachers, in that the public’s perception of older-more experienced teachers translates into higher status and respect (Cushman, 2005). Another interesting finding noted that those teachers teaching higher grades were viewed by some with more respect than those teachers teaching at the lowest grades (Cushman, 2005). Fortunately, the majority of men who do make the decision to enter primary teaching identify status as a minor hindrance. They enter teaching not for pay or status but for more intrinsic rewards such as making a difference in the lives of children (Richardson & Watt, 2006).

The status of teaching has deep historical influences. These historical influences certainly explain how status came to be a point of contention for some men who have considered primary teaching and explains why teaching in general is sometimes under-appreciated by some. Fortunately, those teachers committed to the education of children largely ignore issues related to status and entered teaching not for extrinsic motivation but for intrinsic reward. Unfortunately,

there are people who not only question why men are teaching young children, but also question how these men gained their current employment, accusing them of capitalizing on tokenism.

Tokenism and glass escalators. Some men who enter primary teaching are surprised to learn that they are not always welcome in their assigned school, finding themselves defending the merits for which they were hired. Sometimes they are viewed as outsiders and threats to the job security of their female colleagues. Some female teachers believe their male colleagues did not earn their positions but were placed to fulfil the ‘token male’ role and fear men will be fast-tracked for promotion (Williams, 1992). According to some researchers this notion of tokenism is prevalent in the profession itself (Foster & Newman, 2005; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003).

Token Male 1

Summer vacation,
Beach bound, book in hand.
Stop for gas and snacks.
In line, a familiar face,
She got me my first job, I’m excited to say hi, catch up.

“Oh you’re not in Montague?” she asks...
“Hey! She got her male.”

I give my friendly, yet not entirely with you, laugh
I pay, wave, smile.
“Enjoy your summer” I say.

Somersaulting in the gulf.
Bocce on the beach.
Sand trapped between pages.
It’s on my mind.

“Many maintain that in adhering to traditional gender roles and patterns, these men are likely to benefit from ‘the glass escalator effect’ that frequently results in preferential treatment of men in traditionally ‘female’ professions, thus further disadvantaging women” (Williams, 1992; Isaacs & Poole, 1996 as cited in Sumsion, 2000, p 138). This view, that through tokenism men

ride a 'glass escalator' and take the 'top' jobs away from women, is a popular complaint of female teachers (Farquhar, 1997). In some studies, men themselves have even acknowledged possible 'fast-tracking' in primary settings (Carrington, 2002). Overall, this glass escalator phenomenon as suggested by Mills, Martino, and Lingard (2004) does appear valid as men do tend to occupy a disproportionate number of management or administrative positions in Western schools (Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2004). According to Cushman's (2006) research into hiring tendencies, participating principals indicated that, all things being equal, they would favour male applicants, but would not hire men at the expense of good teaching. Many principals in the same study recognized a need for a better gender balance on their staff but lacked knowledge relating to how masculinity influences teaching and learning (Jones, 2006).

In summary when all things are equal, men do appear to be favoured over female teachers in the hiring for primary assignments. Trends seem to suggest that men are favoured for administrative positions. Although more research may be necessary, and certainly needs to be explored in a Prince Edward Island context, these findings add credibility to women's complaints regarding tokenism and the glass elevator effect.

Nurturance and caring. Notions of men's inability to properly 'care' and nurture also feed the 'no man's land' argument (Skelton, 2003). Jones stated that within her study "There was an implicit view not only that teaching young children should be a female domain, but that women are better at it" (2007, p 189). In many cases, women trumpet this argument claiming men do not belong in the early learning sector (Harnett & Lee, 2003). Noddings (1992, as cited in Jones 2007) also indicated that men who are perceived as not able to properly care, are singled out and denounced as unable to do the work of women. However, "the social attitudes which have

promoted the acceptability of women rising to positions of power in professional and managerial life have, perhaps less stridently, upheld the rights of males to encroach on the traditional female territory of the caring professions” (Ashley, 2003, p. 260).

It is true that caring is an important part of primary education; however caring and nurturance have multiple meanings and representations. “Caring relationships may be perceived by teachers in different ways in their daily work, according to their interpretation of responsibilities and priorities” (Smedley & Peperell, 2000, p. 262). Immediate thoughts regarding caring may conjure up images of a teacher who is sensitive, gentle and one who hugs. However Brichenno and Thorton’s work highlighted the ambiguities of caring, where varied definitions of caring were shared. Participants defined a caring person as one who “helps and sticks up for them and whom they look up to and respect” (2007, p. 385). This suggests caring is not necessarily reserved to those sensitive personas and is perhaps much more than gentle hugs. Smedley and Peperell (2000) argued that essentialist views that suggest successful caring in school is a women-only outcome, have a too narrowly defined concept of care that excludes men’s deliveries of care. Interestingly enough “there were no reported studies of the classroom teacher as an attachment figure; which is surprising given the stress in the literature on the role of the primary teacher as carer and the historic emphasis of the idealized ‘nurturing’ role of the female teacher” (Ashley, 2003, p.262).

Lamb (1997, as cited in Clark, 2009) concluded that fathers and mothers are equally capable of having responsive, sensitive, and caring relationships with their children. “Psychological research across families from all ethnic backgrounds suggests that fathers' affection and increased family involvement help promote children's social and emotional

development” (Stombar, 2005, para. 5). Perhaps the same could be said as to the importance of men caring for children within schools? According to the American Psychological Association (2011) one only needs to look at the caring dynamics in families to appreciate the caring potential of men in schools.

Historically, research on child development has focused more on the sensitivity of mothers to fulfilling their children’s needs. However, in the last 20 to 30 years, research has increasingly focused on fathers. This is due to the growing role modern day fathers play in caregiving (The Changing Role, 2011, Changes in Caregiving Roles section, para. 1).

Recent studies involving men and caring have suggested that the time fathers spend with their children is growing (Clark, 2009). In the 1970’s fathers spent approximately 15 minutes per day ‘caring’ for their children, but in the 1990’s the time increased to two hours (Clark, 2009).

“Formerly, fathers did not tend to be too involved with their children early on. Their relationships were broadly based only later in their children's lives. Now they've become significant child-care providers from early in their children's lives” (Lamb as cited Stombar, 2005, para. 8). Caring however, is not necessarily about spending time with a child; it is about the quality of time spent and the type of interaction between parent and child. “What's important is that children experience nurturing, warmth and sensitivity, and that someone is investing the time and energy in the child” (Lamb as cited Stombar, 2005, Father Love section, para. 10).

Ashley (2001, as cited in Cushman, 2008) provided evidence that some school personnel held certain expectations that required men to model behaviour that ‘showed’ caring. Hutchings, Carrington, Francis, Skelton, Read, and Hall (2008) indicated that even at the school policy level there are expectations that men should exhibit behaviours that show men as caring and gentle. However, the fact that some men do not hug their students, does not mean that they do not care

and may by choice effectively communicate and demonstrate caring by other means.

Side Tackle

I hug my students everyday.
Not all of them, some are not huggers.
One insists on a handshake.
There are a few that love to give a hug at the end of the day.
But
I've a new move.
They zig? I zag.

I use this strategy to protect myself,
this is only a recent thing though – an upshot of my increasing awareness.

It's called the side hug.
Looks as if the little rugers are side tackling.
It works, it's a tweak, I'm more comfortable.

They get their hug.

King (2005) concluded that men are certainly capable of caring and are effective in their caring, but because they are men, they are viewed as uncommon. “Some men do think about the ways they can demonstrate care” (Smedley and Peperell, 2000, p. 272), and Jones (2007) suggested men are more formal or calculated in the way that they demonstrate caring, often in contrast to traditional visible ‘caring’ behaviours such as hugging, hand holding, sitting on laps, or shoulders to cry on. Some men likely limit their caring to other ‘safer’ representations such as high-fives, pats on backs, hair tussles, handshakes, and ‘hybrid’ hugs. Cushman (2010) suggested men demonstrated care by forming bonds through shared interests such as sports. Some men, through ongoing relationships with students, model “a nurturing masculinity and valued expressivity and emotional literacy, which appeared to be manifested in his [their] genuine concern for and interest in the well-being of his [their] students” (Martino, Mills, & Lingard, 2005 p. 244). Martino, Mills, and Lingard further explained that this caring was “constructed in

specifically gendered terms, as a fatherly mode of relating and caring” (p. 244), “I treat each of the kids in my class as though they’re my own son, my child, and I want them to develop to the best of their ability emotionally, socially, behaviourally and academically” (2005, p. 244).

The challenge then is to convince naysayers that even single men without fatherly experience are also capable of caring within the classroom. Bradley (2010) argued that the issue related to men and caring is not about the men themselves as each man is capable of caring, but is more about the suspicions that others hold in relation to how men care. Bradley further suggested that caring or the act of caring is highly individualized, regardless of biological sex or sexual orientation or parental experience or otherwise, and is guided by a person’s philosophy about children and learning. As such, it is important that teachers not pigeon-hole their expectations about caring into rigidly defined representations of care.

Just as men continue to be recognized for their pivotal role for care and nurturance within families, men should also continue to be recognized as able and necessary care-givers and nurturers in the classroom. Research suggests the delivery of care is highly individualized and both men and women are equally able to care and to nurture children; perhaps opening a door for more men to join the profession.

“More men needed” discourse. This literature review began by considering the likelihood that more men will enter primary teaching. What is more important however is whether there is a genuine need for more male primary teachers. Surprisingly there’s much contradictory evidence surrounding the need for male primary teachers.

Whether in quiet conversation in school staff rooms or through highly public features in national newspapers, it seems the call for more male teachers in elementary schools frequents

school improvement discourses (Abraham, 2010). This call for more male teachers has been debated at the Canadian Teachers Federation (Froese-Germain, 2006, 2003; Slamet, 2004; Wallace, 2007) and has motivated Education Ministries to publicly acknowledge the need for more male teachers (Leslie, 2004 as cited in Froese-Germain, 2006). It seems the main catalyst provoking this call for more male teachers falls along rallying cries to address boys' underachievement (Abraham, 2010).

Widely used standardized tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment suggests there is cause for concern relating to boy's literacy achievement (Knighton, Brochu, & Gluszynski, 2010). Locally, 13-year-old boys trail their female peers on the Pan-Canadian Reading Assessments (PCAP – 13, 2007). The Prince Edward Island's common assessments indicate there is an achievement gap favouring girls across many literacy indicators (Kerwin, 2011). In response to the suggested boys' underachievement, the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation's Diversity and Equity in Education Committee made addressing the needs of boys in school a major priority for the 2010/2011 school year. Many researchers such as: Gold (1995); Williams (1995); Lee-Potter (2003 as cited in Shelton, 2008); and Younger and Warrington (2004), concur that boys are underachieving when compared to girls.

However the boys' achievement challenges may be causing 'moral panic' – an exaggerated response to a social issue (Cohen, 1972). Connolly (2004) offered key trends relating to the achievement differences of boys and girls that may tame the 'moral panic': (a) the gender gap is stable, not growing as was once perceived to be, and since 2000 the gap may actually be closing; and (b) boys do achieve less across some social and ethnic categories but the achievement lag is relatively small and “the gap between boys and girls is not the same for all

[social and ethnic] groups but tends to be largest among those groups that, as a whole, are already the most likely to perform least well” (2004, p. 30). For example Spanish, Portuguese, and Somali grade 10 students are particularly susceptible to literacy challenges (Martino, 2008). Finally Connolly reminds us that (c) some boys are doing very well, suggesting achievement differences within sub-populations of boys and girls instead of broader gender-defined groupings. We might therefore question the need for focusing so much attention on the boys’ underachievement and instead learn from the successes of specific sub-populations where both girls and boys have made strides in areas of the curriculum. Also, the ‘panic’ over boy's achievement and a so-called male teacher cure may be a moot point. Much research suggests a teacher’s gender has little or no impact on boys’ achievement (Harnett & Lee, 2003; Connolly, 2004; Skelton, 2001; Roulston & Mills, 2000). Yet, despite the multitude of studies refuting the link between boys’ achievement and male teachers, there exists philosophical perspectives touting the importance of more male primary teachers (Kauffman 2011).

“Male teachers provide boys and girls with a positive image of men, who are themselves learners and who demonstrate a positive attitude to education” (Shelton, 2008, p. 5). Renolds (as cited in Shelton, 2008) offered potential negative consequences of boys internalizing school as a female space:

whilst boys had a strong need to assert their academic superiority over girls, this often took the form of depicting their academic achievements as failures, belittling their serious commitment to school work and mocking their contributions to whole class discussions. This infers that boys perceive being studious as a feminine attribute, particularly in primary schools where there are few male classroom practitioners to break this perception. (p. 5)

Farquhar (1997), citing social learning research concurred, suggesting men do influence

children's behaviour and attitudes up to the age of eight, and thus those children who see men working in early years will recognize men as care givers.

Shelton (2008) suggested we actively make an effort to get as wide a range of adults as possible into schools – including men. This wide range of adult educators should closely reflect greater society and the students they teach (Foote, 2009).

Carrington, Tymms, and Merrell (2003) stated that a male presence within schools is important in that:

increasing the availability of male role models to children (in all age groups) across the primary sector may help to break down enduring gender stereotypes, by conveying an unequivocal message—to children and parents alike—that learning is ‘an acceptable masculine activity’ (p. 323).

Connolly (2004) also expressed the need to challenge the messages that we send to children about masculinity by actively communicating to children that learning is a ‘boy thing’ and success in school is a worthwhile pursuit for boys. Foster and Newman, despite recognizing the complexities of expecting a homogeneous group of men to successfully fulfil role modelling expectations for boys, ultimately “support the idea that men should have equal access to careers in primary schools and that a balanced teaching force that represents society is desirable” (2005, p. 14-15). They went on to express that “primary schools need good teachers of both sexes who have a strong image of self as teacher” (Foster & Newman, 2005, p. 15) Carrington and MacPhee's (2008) work further supported a gender balance, they explained that both male and female teachers view the current balance as an issue and both recognize the potential for gender staff balances to counter problematic stereotypical views that exist in some workforces.

Mulholand and Hansen (2003) presented additional perspectives relating to the

importance of male primary teachers; these ideas are controversial, in that they are difficult to confirm and are refuted by social theory research. Such arguments include: (a) views relating to an existing 'male' teaching technique or style; (b) notions that male teachers can, by default, serve the role as a paternal surrogate; and (c) perceived feminine versus masculine learning modes.

Kauffman (2011) added that the media often portrays boys as being big and strong and doing 'manly' G.I. Joe-like activities and rarely portrays boys as 'real' men in an academic or common professional context. He suggested that male teachers have an opportunity to counteract these messages by providing boys with an alternative model to aspire to.

Despite the above arguments, Mullholland and Hansen (2003) emphasized the need for the 'right kind of man' to work in the primary grades: one who teaches well and is aware of the influences that masculinity has on learning. Connolly (2004) reminded us that effective primary teaching is not about gender but is ultimately about good teaching.

The view that men are needed to address boys' underachievement appears defunct, as researchers have demonstrated no clear link between the gender of teacher and academic success. What is a clear indicator of academic success is quality teaching. Many stakeholders in education call for a balanced teaching workforce that reflects society so that all children regardless of gender, nationality, sexual orientation, or religion can internalize the value of learning.

Complexities of Role Modelling and Identity

Of all the arguments that call for more male primary teachers, the idea that men are required to serve as role models for boys is mostly widely suggested (Abraham, 2010). However, within this notion of men as role models, researchers begin to unravel the true

complexities of male primary teaching.

Role modelling challenged. As noted, men are often called upon to be role models for students, especially for boys, but what modelling or model is needed for boys? What about those men who are unable to fulfil role modelling expectations? What role do they play? Are the expectations imposed upon them fair?

The View

We chat and laugh.

“You must be learning so much about your wife with us?”

“Yeah, it’s just like The View here!”

“You’re doing well to put up with us everyday...
but we do need more of you...
the children need more men in these halls,
they need to see role models.”

I’m happy.

I’m comfortable with that, and I agree...

Then I get into this research thing, and I worry...

What am I really teaching them?

What role do you want me to model?

What modeling am I doing?

And I wish I could have 8 years of teaching back.

Cushman (2005) outlined the fundamental flaw related to male teacher as suitable role model for boys:

The expectation that the male teacher will provide an effective role model and the confusion regarding the explicit characteristics they are expected to model has long been an issue for men... that one is expected to model particular, but unspecified, male characteristics and behaviours is in itself daunting. To know you are expected to be a “father substitute” could be almost inconceivable, especially for young, single males. (p. 232)

Although some men accept their ‘responsibility’ of role modelling, others are troubled and annoyed by the role modelling expectation (Skelton, 2009; Smedley & Pepperell, 2000;

Mulholland & Hansen, 2003). “Many teachers do not see, for example, being a ‘gender role model’ as being of too much consequence and are more concerned about presenting themselves to children as ‘good citizens’ (or ethical templates)” (Skelton, 2009, p. 29).

In an earlier study Skelton (2003) also argued:

The assumption that raising the proportion of male teachers will provide boys with positive, work-oriented ‘role models’ is based on notions of gender which have long been challenged; that is, such strategies are underpinned by sex role socialization theories whereby masculinity and femininity are located solely within male and female bodies respectively. This unidimensional, essentialist way of conceiving of gender has been unsatisfactory in explaining and understanding differences between men and men, and women and women. (p. 195)

Men, upon entering the classroom with the knowledge that there is a role modelling expectation, engage in a practice where they reflect “on what attitudes and behaviours they wanted young people to associate with the male gender” (Cushman, 2005, p. 233). Skelton’s later works emphasized ‘multiple ways of being’ (2007, p. 688), suggesting a male teacher might model varied and deliberately positioned or enacted masculinities resulting in a mixed bag of gendered messages. This mixed bag communicates to young boys a multitude of masculinities, some helpful and some a hindrance.

Additional findings suggest other problems with the role model expectations: “boys role model themselves primarily upon other boys, and that the direct influence of teachers is limited” (Ashley, 2003, p. 267).

Just as all individual teachers are unique, so too are the ways in which they carry themselves and the ways in which behaviour is modelled. To ask men to model what it means to be ‘a good man’, while defining them as homogenous group, is to assume that all male teachers will deliver the message the same way and as others intended them to do so. Teaching boys to be

studious, respectable, sensitive, etc., is noble and needed and should be an expectation of all teachers. What is problematic is the assumptions that we make about how best to do this. Within those assumptions we find the possibilities of disagreement, conflict, and misunderstanding. The complexities associated with masculinity (and femininity) highlight the problem with a one-size-fits-all mentality and the dangers of asking men and women alike to fit a mold they may not be capable of fitting into.

Identity negotiations and constructs. In many careers, including teaching, our work often defines who we are. Those who are unable to meet unrealistic work expectations are forced to carry what could be described as ‘personas of survival;’ personas not reflective of their true self but one that serves their work life. This is problematic for many professionals.

Primary teachers, at least early in their career, find themselves constantly in a state of being and becoming (Skelton, 2009). Men, in finding themselves within a minority, make a conscious effort to negotiate their identities, identities not necessarily representative of their true persona but one that serves their personal or professional ambition or needs (Francis & Skelton, 2001). The need to present an alternative persona could originate from feeling an imagined or genuine social pressure to appear less feminine to counter certain stereotypes that suggest primary male teachers are effeminate (Francis & Skelton, 2001). In such situations men expressed a need to identify themselves as ‘properly masculine’ (Skelton, 2001; Martino & Berrill, 2003). These male teachers took deliberate steps to portray themselves as ‘real men’ to reestablish their masculinities within a ‘feminized’ profession, sometimes by modelling ‘bravado’ or ‘sporty’ behaviours (Francis & Skelton, 2001).

TV Teacher

Getting ready for work, on the TV I see 'another.'
Some PD broadcast, maybe distance education. Topic: Guided Reading.
Unusual I think, he's doing a good job but not quite like Fountas & Pinnell
Then, I think something else...a small twinge...

How gay is that!
Do I sound and look that way?

I've surprised myself.

What did I just think? Did I say it out loud?

Because I am aware of the research I am ashamed...
Because it's wrong I am ashamed...

but it's true I don't want to 'show' that way.
I am caught.
I, in thinking, demonstrate what others wrongly think.
I, in thinking, wish to portray differently, to change what they may think.

Despite men's efforts to position themselves within some definition of masculine, the ambiguities of masculinity further complicate matters. Consider, the four performances of masculinities as reported by (Connell, 1995 as cited in Roulston & Mills, 2000): (a) hegemonic masculinity is the traditional view of masculinity of having power over women or of those 'sporty' men engaged in high-risk 'manly' activities; (b) subordinate masculinities are behaviours that are in direct competition with hegemonic qualities sometimes viewed as the masculinities of effeminate men; (c) marginalized masculinities inform and are informed by external conflicting factors such class, culture, communities, ethnicity, and race; (d) complicit masculinities, which are often at play in identity negotiations, develop when men who do not necessarily agree with a certain masculine performance portray an altered masculinity to position themselves within gender orders. In light of these four masculinities, a 'proper' male role model for boys becomes a

difficult idea to define, as all men and boys fall somewhere within (or beyond) the described performances.

Whether naturally constructed or falsely enacted, identity construction and reconstruction by men who feel as though they have to act ‘differently,’ does occur (Foster & Newman, 2005). Skelton (2009) identifies three dimensions of a teacher’s identity: professional, situational, and personal. Professional identity is defined by what it means to be an effective teacher; situational identity refers to teachers’ daily workplace context; and personal identity is about a teacher’s life outside of work. These three dimensions inform and are informed by each other. Consider the following example from Porter (2005):

I have quality time with my family, and the skills I have learned through my school communities have taught me to be a better parent. My home life has also given me a deeper perspective into the children I teach. Home and school complement and help each other. The father figure role I represent at school—the loving, caring, nurturing part I bring into the classroom—helps children who have not had male influence. (para. 6)

These closely linked identity dimensions inform our professional judgements and personal attitudes. In situations where men engage in forced identity construction, where they are forced, or feel a need, to act differently, open themselves up to potentially troublesome internal conflict.

Consider a participant named John from Mills, Hasse, and Charlton’s (2008) study:

teaching to meet the imaginary ideal can be difficult, if not impossible, for men like John who do not readily accept the hegemonic masculine expectations of the imaginary teacher, but also – paradoxically– reject the exploitative expectations attached to caring with which female teachers are often burdened (2008, p. 81).

Alternatively, asking a deeply entrenched hegemonic man to act more effeminate could also be

unfair and unsettling to those men.

Smith (2004) and Kondo (1990) explained that identity and work are closely linked, in that an individual's work embodies their sense of self and work is a meaningful catalyst for identity construction. Foster and Newman (2005) in documenting the challenges that men face in working at the primary teaching explained the danger of conflicting identities in that they shared evidence of fractured masculinities that were, in a sense, competing with each other. One might assume that in the long run this constant competition, the push and pull of masculine tendencies, could be not only be detrimental to one's career but also to one's health. There is a need for teachers to "feel confident but not dogmatic about their sense of self as teachers, and not limited by stereotypes of masculinity and femininity" (Smedley & Pepperell, 2000).

Stereotypes influence the experience of male primary teachers. Some men, despite being uncomfortable with the expectations that others have of them, go to great lengths to negotiate their identities to serve professional purposes. Other men, in realizing that they do not fit the prescribe mold of male primary teacher, force themselves to change. Other men, in realizing that others see them as, perhaps effeminate for example, go to great lengths to reaffirm their hegemonic masculinity. In all cases such 'meddling' is potentially dangerous.

Summary

This literature review, in explaining the issues related to men who teach at the primary level presented: (a) facts relating to the demographics of male primary teaching and suggested the likelihood of reversing these demographic trends; (b) highlighted the challenges and opportunities before men who teach at the primary level; (c) offered discourses that seem to inform men's experiences and also inform how others view these men; (d) suggested

complexities associated with role modelling and how expectations of men affect men's identities. Most of the topics presented in the literature review seem to be related to binaries of gender that are informed by stereotypes. These essentialized ideas of what it means to be man or female sets up expectations of men that do impact on their professional and personal lives. *The Lonely End of the Pink* is very much about the topics presented in this literature, in that the men who I have spent time with, have communicated narrative that are representative of the themes outlined above. As a teacher, I find their stories comforting and familiar yet some of them are also intriguing. This research explores, for the first time in this province, the challenges and opportunities that envelope the men who teach our youngest students.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

Research Methods

The experiences of male primary teachers are largely under researched (Smith, 2004; Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008) and in Prince Edward Island this topic appears unexplored altogether. This chapter outlines the tools and procedures that were used to explore the experiences of 13 men (14 when I include myself) who teach at the primary level in Prince Edward Island. Thirteen men participated in an initial interview and three participated in follow-up conversations. The research unfolded over a three month period (November to January).

Some of the themes that were explored include: (a) anticipated career paths; (b) challenges and opportunities in working in a female-dominated atmosphere; (c) stereotyping related to male primary teachers and teaching; (d) equality in the context of hiring, promotion, and treatment in the workplace; (e) nurturance and caring in the context of teaching and working with children.; (f) role modelling and the need for male primary teachers.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island was the primary focus of this study. This study also sought to compare and contrast the experiences male primary school teachers on PEI to those experiences in other locales. In light of the uniqueness of Prince Edward Island society, another goal of this study was to determine if the challenges faced by men are more pronounced and/or are the opportunities less fruitful? Understandings about reflexivity and its practical application in research were also anticipated through the execution of this study. Perhaps new ways of managing reflexivity may have presented themselves; this will be discussed in greater detail in coming sections of this chapter.

Ontological, and epistemological considerations. Silverman “maintains that qualitative researchers have become increasingly interested in testing theories” (as cited in Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009, p. 130) but “qualitative researchers do not consider the measurement of concepts to be of central part of their works, although concepts are still very much a part of the landscape” (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009, p. 130). As such, this study was inductive in its design and execution, but it did, for the purposes of placing the experiences of men in a cultural context, include a potentially deductive-like component or research question: Do these men, in the context of PEI’s unique qualities, experience increased or intensified hardship or opportunity as primary teachers? Exploring how the uniqueness of PEI may accentuate the challenges and joys experienced by male teachers is an important perspective that should not be ignored. If such conclusions are not accessible by this study, then perhaps this topic is best suited for future research initiatives. Such research “frequently leads to an interest in how social phenomena are represented” (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009, p. 11) and therefore remains an interest for me.

The inductive interest of this research, learning from the men who teach primary students on Prince Edward Island, was the study’s central research objective. To do this, I utilized a comparative qualitative approach using preconceived yet evolving codes (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009). Using this approach, participant responses were continually compared to concepts and categories that were initially defined by trends outlined in the literature review. Thus, the concepts and categories could be adjusted, reaffirmed, or denied. By constantly comparing emerging messages to existing concepts, I was able to identify new concepts; concepts that were not identified in the literature review. This approach permitted me to update the themes emerging from conversations as they unfolded and would later allow me to go back through transcripts so

that these new emerging concepts could be applied to the content of all interviews. Essentially the transcripts were analyzed first using initial concepts and then analyzed additional times using an expanded range of concepts.

Rigour and trustworthiness. Addressing rigour and trustworthiness within a qualitative study requires researchers to consider all aspects pertaining to transferability, dependability, credibility, and confirmability. Researchers' standpoints should also be stated so that readers may come to view the study as credible. The following paragraphs outline how trustworthiness was built into this study.

Replicating this study does have some challenges, but there exists a certain degree of transferability within this type of study. As will be discussed further in Chapter Four, the messages from the findings indicate that the participants had similar experiences of those of other studies; this suggests the study could be transferred to other jurisdictions. It appears future researchers could implement a similar study in another jurisdiction even if the social conditions differed from those of PEI. I have placed much emphasis on linking interview questions and emerging concepts to similar concepts from previous findings therefore, I believe transferability is sound because I have observed congruence's between this study and others.

Some aspects of dependability could be perceived as potentially weak as the study depended on the interpretations of one researcher. However, I feel I am credible in that I am immersed in the primary teaching experience and have explored this topic in the past (Kerwin, 2010) and I have studied qualitative inquiry at the graduate level. Also, throughout the process, through ongoing reflection, I took steps to 'separate' myself from the study when necessary. I believe concerns regarding dependability within this study are not warranted because I have kept

comprehensive records throughout the research process. These records include: (a) original transcripts; (b) copies of 'dissected' and thematically reorganized transcripts; (c) quantification of themes; (d) clear data codes reflective of the emerging themes from the literature review; (e) informal notes and spreadsheets that were used to organize data and themes; (f) records of questions that are closely linked to existing research; and (g) rich qualitative interview excerpts which are presented in Chapter Four. Care was taken to ensure transparency, allowing potential auditors to understand decisions made regarding the questions asked (by directly linking questions to literature review findings) and how the responses were analyzed. Complete records such as transcripts and documents that supported data analysis will be maintained and guarded for approximately 5 years.

The trustworthiness of this study is strong as I have worked for a number of years within the primary teaching levels and I am acutely aware of the issues that men face at the primary level but I am not burdened by them. I feel my interpretations have high congruence between theory and representations.

Credibility was built into the study through respondent validation, by allowing all participants the opportunity to review their own transcripts and to make suggestions. I honoured all requests made by the participants regarding desired changes to their transcripts.

I hoped that the details generated by the interviews could contribute to a base of knowledge that is transferable and useable by other researchers. However, I am very aware of the dangers of people in small communities putting 'two and two together' and making connections as to who-said-what-about-whom and therefore all records were securely stored and will continue to be. Also all names of individuals, communities, and schools appear as pseudonyms.

It is important that readers understand my standpoint in the context of this study. Being a male primary teacher myself, I have not only been informed by ongoing research, but I have experienced some of the challenges that men face and to a certain degree I am concerned about some of the issues pertaining to male primary teaching. These concerns are reflected in the poetry that I have submitted as data. Readers may question the validity of my interpretations or view this project as self-serving by justifying my current employment but it should be noted that this study is by no means a vendetta against women nor is the research itself meant to spur some sort of rally for a men's cause - although it does call on our community to address some of the challenges experienced by men. This study's primary focus was, without any other intention, an attempt to understand the male primary teacher experience. There exists a research gap as it pertains to male teachers and their experience that should be explored. This work should be a reflection of the realities that men experience in their daily lives as primary teachers. In the spirit of education, I plan to highlight the challenges and opportunities before these men in an effort to present one piece of a puzzle that will perhaps eventually better schools in PEI. By acknowledging the issues noted above, concerns regarding "confirmability" within this study should be reduced (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009, p. 132).

I have highlighted some concerns regarding trust and rigour, but I have also shared some strategies that I employed to counter such concerns. I believe I have sufficiently addressed questions regarding dependability, credibility, confirmability and transferability, and have been up front about potential bias in this study.

Reflexivity and its role in the research process. As previously noted, aspects of reflexivity played an important role in this study. As a researcher who is also an active teacher, I

have experienced the influence of reflexivity and therefore, instead of ignoring its influence, have attempted to make use of it.

“Reflexivity refers to the fact that all accounts (in speech and writing) are essentially not just about something but are also doing something” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 260). It is with this knowledge that a portion of the research design was formulated: carefully taking male primary teachers from a state of not knowing to knowing while making use of the reflexive influences. Ideally, true understandings related to the experiences of these teachers should be obtained without deliberate reflexive influences however reflexive influences are often unavoidable. Even the questions that are asked in research influences the participants' responses to some degree and therefore, should be managed (Schwandt, 2007). Many aspects of this study, even the questions posed in interviews informed the participants, thus managing reflexivity was important.

Managing reflexivity by limiting its influence during interviews, but then utilizing its potential during follow-up conversations allowed me to build accountability into the reflexive aspect of this study. Such practices, as Skeggs (2009) believed, is important for accountability in research.

Managing power relationships in research is an important consideration because there is a hierarchy between unknown and knower (Adkins, 2009). As with this study, there are external factors that influence experience yet the participants may have had no apparent knowledge of such influences on their experiences; a perspective that, as researcher, I am afforded the privilege. The men, at least initially were the knowers; they, to the best of their knowledge, knew about their experiences. They, in turn, interpreted their experiences and then communicated them to me. Through this process, I learned of the unknowns and became a knower; I came to

know their experience. However another process was unfolding. As a researcher I became aware that, in some cases, there existed a disconnect between the participants knowledge of their own experiences and the reality that surrounded their experiences. The participants in working and in living were experiencing something, yet their experience may very well have been obscured by influences they were not aware of. Through participation in this study, the participants would begin to become more aware of the challenges around them, and as such, their experiences might, with this new awareness, be self-interpreted in a different way. In light of this process, the gap between 'unknown and 'knower' narrowed and this narrowing was experienced by both the participants and me.

Researcher and participant reflexivity depends on “prior positions and the resources from which they [participants] can draw” (Skeggs, 2009, p. 368). Therefore facilitating the participants’ journey from ‘unaware’ to ‘aware’ was important. They needed, as I will discuss in Chapter Five, to come to know the issues that swirled among them as new knowledge might rightfully alter their own interpretations of their experiences.

Using reflexivity as a methodological tool is not without precedence. Such methods allowed “feminist scholars to investigate social relations of gender in an increasingly responsible way” (McKie, 2009, p. 297). Feminist social scientists have also used reflexivity in their research initiatives as an analytical tool allowing “them to interrogate their own social location and to disentangle how it shaped their definition of the situation” (McKie, 2009, p. 297).

I believed that guiding participants on a journey of discovery, related to their teaching experience, was a responsible undertaking. Some may argue that less knowledge may be better, a what-they-don’t-know-won’t-hurt-them mentality, but providing men with the opportunity to

learn about the challenges faced by others was important. Providing an avenue for the participants to form lasting collaborative relationships was also important. This will allow them to address the challenges they face, partly through increased knowledge and through collaborative networking. Engaging men in the process that Freire theorized as conscientization, where we are “to engage in 'praxis' or critical reflection” (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 121), was not only responsible but was perhaps an ethical requirement of this research.

Even though I took steps to manage reflexivity influences directly, through deliberate conscience raising, I cannot ignore the reality that a passive reflexivity, the reflexive influence that occurs automatically as researchers pose questions, existed in this study. Therefore, an open nonjudgmental demeanour was demonstrated to the participants during the interviews so that ‘leading’ participants during conversations was minimized. Open dialogue between participant and researcher was critical because “dialogic recognizes the researchers interests in the research as integral to the dialogue while at the same time relying on the other to teach, if you like, what the researcher must learn” (Smith, 2009, p. 28). With this in mind Smith (2009) asked important guiding questions that I considered in conducting the interviews. Are interviewees influenced or changed by the interviewers? Is this acceptable? Are the interviewees’ responses or words self-influencing? Negative or positive? Are the interviewer’s reactions, however subtle, influential?

As noted, I designed this study to bring participants from limited awareness about the issues surrounding male primary teachers to a heightened awareness. This was done explicitly but also existed implicitly through the questioning in interviews and I believe I have managed this aspect of research in a responsible and meaningful way.

Methods: Participants, Sites, Measurements & Administration

The following sections outline specific details relating to the methods used in this study. It encompasses a wide range of considerations from locations, to access to participants, to participant expectations, to the process of informed consent.

Setting. This study was conducted in Prince Edward Island and involved teachers from Eastern School District, Western School Board, and the French Language School Board.

Commitment. Participants were asked to participate in a semi-structured interview and a follow-up conversation. The initial interview lasted approximately 1 ½ hours and took place during November and December. The follow-up conversations lasted one (1) hour and took place in January.

Data management and instruments. Interviews and conversations were all digitally recorded. The initial interview guides and the guide for the follow-up conversations can be found in the appendices (Appendix B and C respectfully). As noted, the interviews were semi-structured which allowed for the use of probing questions as dialogue unfolded. Where possible the interviews were face-to-face however, to accommodate the needs of one participant, a phone interview was conducted.

Recruitment of participants. All participants were contacted directly via telephone or email and following initial conversations, the process of informed consent was initiated. Table 2 outlines a demographic profile of the sample used in the initial interviews:

Access to participants. Gaining access to research sites and participants was achieved by gaining approval on five fronts. Initial research and ethics board approvals was granted by the

Table 2

Breakdown of Initial Interview Participants

Participant	Participant Category and Grade Level	School Board	Geo. Region
1	Preservice Grade 3	Eastern	Charlottetown Area
2	Preservice Grade 2	Eastern	Charlottetown Area
3	Preservice Grade 2	Eastern	Charlottetown Area
4	Active Grade 2/3	Eastern	Kings County
5	Active Grade 3	Eastern	Charlottetown Area
6	Active Grade 3	Eastern	Queens County
7	Active Grade 3	French	Charlottetown Area
8	Active Grades 1-3	Eastern	Various
9	Active Kindergarten	Eastern	Queens County
10	Retired Grade 3	Eastern	Charlottetown Area
11	Active Grade 3	Western	Summerside Area
12	Past Grades 1-3	Western	Prince County
13	Active Kindergarten	Western	Prince Country
14	Author as Participant	Eastern	Charlottetown Area

University of Prince Edward Island's Research Ethics Board (Appendix D), permission was then obtained from the three Prince Edward Island school boards and from UPEI's Faculty of Education (Appendix E).

Risk probabilities. Risk probabilities were quite low. All precautions were taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Readers who may have an interest in identifying participants or an interest in matching participants to corresponding comments could only make suppositions as to who-said-what-about-whom. Built in procedures and features of this study ensured that unwanted breaches and unjustified conclusions are very unlikely. Strict regulations

limit access to the data.

Mitigating risks. The following precautions highlight procedures used for mitigating risk during all interviews: (a) interviews were held in private behind closed doors at a venue that was comfortable for the participants, the participants ultimately had final say on interview locations; (b) if participants offered names during an interview, the names appear as pseudonyms in transcripts; (c) selected pseudonyms did not match the names of any staff members to which the participant belongs; (d) participants were consulted about possible pseudonyms; (e) if through the participants' narratives, an event or situation was presented that would allow others to recognize the event or situation, then the details were 'washed' so that anonymity and confidentiality was maintained.

Risk for communities. This study posed no risk to communities.

Direct benefits. Providing men with the opportunity to learn about the challenges faced by others and providing an avenue for the participants to form lasting collaborative relationships constitute the major benefits for the participants.

Informed consent. Informed consent was initially extended to representatives of the three major school boards in Prince Edward Island. The school boards were asked for permission to contact participants and to approve the overall study as presented in Appendix F. The Faculty of Education at UPEI was also asked for permission to work with preservice teachers.

As noted, the participants were initially contacted by phone, email, or in person to: (a) briefly introduce the study; (b) communicate the voluntary nature of the study; and (c) to communicate the commitment level. Following the initial contact with possible participants, a cover letter (Appendix G), information sheets (Appendix H), and general consent form

(Appendix I) were forwarded to interested participants. Participants received a follow-up call or email so that they had an opportunity to ask questions related to their participation. Only upon signing consent forms were interview times and locations established.

Ongoing consent. Upon agreeing to participate in this study, participants entered into the ongoing consent phase of the informed consent process. The ongoing consent process engaged participants at each step of the study where they were asked to reaffirm their commitment by signing additional consent forms (Appendix J and Appendix K). This reaffirmation occurred after they were informed in detail of the data collection instrument they were about to engage with. For example, before the interviews the participants were presented with an overview of the interview (topics, time commitment, etc.). They were reminded of the free and willing nature of this study. They were reminded that they were welcome to withdraw at any point or choose not to participate, they could choose not to answer questions, and they could request to have any comment withdrawn. Such ongoing informed consent dialogue occurred prior to all interviews and conversations.

Data Sensitivity Considerations. Due to the personal and professional nature of the topics that were discussed, the participants were reminded of the need for confidentiality and anonymity. I signed a Non-Disclosure agreement (Appendix L) pledging my responsibility for and commitment to confidentiality.

The following subject areas were discussed: (a) an in-depth exploration of the male primary teaching experience highlighting the challenges and opportunities associated with men teaching in primary schools: (b) a collection of discourses was explored related to male primary teaching and about the men who teach at this level this included stereotypes and stereotyping; (c)

the complexities associated with the expectation that men should be role models for children and how this expectation affected the participants was explored; (d) participants were asked to expand on their career path / journey; (e) the participants were also asked to comment on how they demonstrated care towards students; (f) the participants were asked to expand in detail about their relationships with their colleagues.

De-identification safeguards include fictitious school names with no indication of the school board to which the school belonged. As noted, pseudonyms were used and steps were taken to ensure that the pseudonyms did not match any person on the participants' staff list.

Confidentiality in this study was confined to the limits of the law. If through the course of this study any participants disclosed information related to a third party's safety, then confidentiality was to be waived and proper steps were to be taken (notifying authorities). Participants were not necessarily made aware of this possibility, but as teachers, the participants are aware of the law pertaining to the duty to report disclosures to social services or other outside agencies. Fortunately this was not an issue in this study.

Compensation and debriefing. In most cases I travelled to meet with participants at their place of employment, homes, or other locations that were convenient for the participants to travel to. As a result, no compensation was offered to the participants. They were not asked to assume any expenses during their participation in this study.

The participants were debriefed after all interviews. The debriefing scripts can be found in Appendix M. After each interview the participants were offered an opportunity to voice any concerns or pose last questions and were informed of the role of UPEI's Research Ethics Board.

The final aspect of the debriefing in this study included a presentation of the findings to

the participants. This was achieved by presenting them with a summary of the findings before the thesis was published.

Data Integrity. Data were collected using the instruments previously noted in appendices B1 to B3 and C. Complete records such as: interview transcripts, documents that supported data analysis, and all forms will be maintained and guarded (for approximately 5 years). The raw data and support documents were stored in three secure locations: (a) online using password protected and undisclosed 'cloud' technology such as iCloud© or Dropbox©; (b) on a password protected personal computer; and (c) on an external hard-drive under lock and key. Hard copies of forms such as signed consent forms were copied and locked in two secure locations.

After five calendar years, the data will be destroyed and removed from the online cloud, personal computer, external hard drive, and from physical spaces. Data on computers and hard drives will be removed using a rigorous data deletion tool such as Virtual Shredder © or alternative. Data deleted from clouds will depend on the sophistication of the cloud service. Hard copies will also be destroyed in a responsible manner.

Analysis Overview

Throughout the research process, participant responses were continually compared to initially defined concepts and categories derived from trends emerging from the literature review. Continually comparing the findings to the categories and concepts permitted me to adjust, reaffirm, or eliminate concepts and categories. This process also allowed me to create new categories as new understandings developed.

A important feature of this study are the measures taken to ensure that interview questions were congruent with research related to the male primary teaching experience. This was required

to determine whether the experiences of Prince Edward Island men are similar to the experiences communicated in other locales. As such, each interview prompt was matched with specific findings from previous studies (Appendix N).

Thematic analysis was used in this study; Riessman (as cited Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009) identified four models of narrative analysis: thematic, structural, interactional, and performative. Two of the four models are used in this study: (a) a thematic analysis sorted expressed views into thematic trends; and (b) an interactional analysis considered dialogue between the myself and participants.

Analysis

Outlined below is the process that was used to analyze the data generated from interviews. Also described below is the process used to analyze follow-up conversations involving three of the participants. Finally, the process used to analyze of my own poetry is also presented.

Data Coding. The three research tools were all coded separately and address different facets of this study. The initial interviews primarily focused on the overall experience of the men who teach at the primary level. The follow-up conversations examined how the questions asked or topics presented within the study affected the participants. The analysis of the poetry blends both the experiential focus of the initial interviews and a reflexive dynamic found within the analysis of the follow-up conversations.

Coding for this study was assisted by open source software called Weft QDA. This software allows researchers to code raw interview transcripts so that the transcripts can be ‘pulled apart’ and reorganized by theme, thus creating new documents which can then be coded further. The software allows researchers the freedom to code, organize, and reorganize text so that usable

‘tagged’ excerpts can be presented.

Initial Interviews. All initial interviews were coded using three levels of coding: First, the transcripts were coded and organized by general topics derived from the literature review such as: (a) becoming a primary teacher; (b) overall experience and professional relationships; (c) socializing and isolation; (d) challenges and opportunities; (e) discourses that inform men’s experiences and that informs how others view these men; (f) complexities associated with role modelling; (g) stereotypical expectations of men; (h) hiring, promotion, and job performance; (i) reflexivity; and (j) demonstrating care. Second, the excerpts were further analyzed by applying a second layer of coding to identify unifying, related, and/or connected themes. These themes also have their origins in the literature review but take on a more individualized quality when the participants were responding to topics. For example, when participants were asked to comment on role-modelling they were asked whether they were troubled by role-modelling or whether it is something that they embraced. The themes that required further categorizing were analyzed a third time and additional ‘deeper’ connections were made among the transcript excerpts.

The three levels of coded concepts and categories evolved throughout the research process (a comparative qualitative approach). After each interview the data were initially examined for ongoing themes and emerging topics, then as the interviews came to an end, the three levels of coding became more defined. Generally speaking however, the concepts were closely linked to the overall topics that were initially identified in the literature review noted above.

Appendix O outlines the coding process, new emerging concepts as described above are noted using “[new]” across all coding levels. The tables in Appendix O present the three levels of

coding used in this study.

Throughout the analysis, it became clear that some concepts are closely linked to others, where the data could be shared by more than one category. Table 3 outlines those related categories where some data ‘sharing’ exists across concepts. For example, conversations about daily routines in primary schools could be both coded as 'Hindering Routines' (routines that limited one's ability to socialize during the school day) or 'Isolated by Consequence' (where participants felt isolated not because of gender or by conscious choice but rather as a consequence of working within the routines in a primary school). Concepts that are closely linked are grouped accordingly.

Table 3

Linked/Shared/Cross Referenced Categories – (Where Groups shared some data)

Group 1:

Seeking Companionship
Reinforced Stereotypes
Conflicted Relationships
Gender Stereotypes

Group 2:

Isolated by Consequence
Hindering Routines
Socializing Effected by Routine

Note. Other groupings could exist in future research depending on reader or researcher interpretations.

Follow-up Conversations. The follow-up conversations unfolded in three parts. Part 1 explored whether the participants experienced any reflexive influences as a result of their general

participation in this study. The second part considered the reactions of the participants as they were presented with findings from the literature review. Part 3, similar to Part 1, questioned whether the participants experienced or could experience reflexive influences as a result of participating in the follow-up conversation. Parts 1 and 3 were coded similarly, but part two required a separate coding approach.

Table 4

Follow-up Conversation Coding (Parts 1 & 3).

Direct Questions	Direct Response to Questions:	Evidence of Reflexive Influence
<p>Question 1: Participants were asked if their participation in this study affected them in any way either professionally or personally.</p> <p>Question 2: Participants were asked if their participation in the follow-up conversation affected them or could affect them in any way either professionally or personally.</p>	<p>Coded as: Agree vs. Disagree</p>	<p>Coded: Based on the participants verbally responded. Where their words matched 1 of 4 codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I thought about that" • "Need to Think" • "Never Thought" • "Makes You Think" <p>Where the participant shared an experience where obvious reflexive influences existed the date were coded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexivity Experienced <p>Where the researcher interpreted possible reflexive influences based on the participant reaction the date were coded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictable Reflexivity

Note. This table does not reflect responses of literature excerpt, only the responses to the listed questions.

Table 4 outlines the coding used for Parts 1 and 3 of the follow-up conversations. The participants' responses to posed questions (Column 1) were simply coded as agreed or disagreed

(Column 2). Then the responses were analyzed and coded for reflexive influences (Column 3).

Part 2 was analyzed differently (Appendix P). First, the participants' reactions to presented findings were coded; then the participants' responses were considered for reflexive influences. The participants' overall reactions to presented literature review findings were also coded.

Coding the poetry. All three levels of the initial interview coding were applied to the poetry content. However, because much of the poetry was written in response to learning about the issues affecting male primary teachers and are not to a response to my participation in an interview, the reflexive influences were simply coded as "reflexivity." Further coding levels under the reflexive category did not apply since the poetry was not in response to my reactions to questions or conversation. This differs from how reflexivity was handled when analyzing the participants' interviews.

Role of the Researcher

During the course of this study I assumed two roles: researcher and participant. As researcher, I attempted to honestly learn from the men who teach or have taught at the primary level. I also included my own experiences as a male primary teacher by submitting my thoughts about teaching in the form of poetry. In this study the poetry had four purposes: (a) it was used as a literary device within the study's literature review, framing topics as they unfolded; (b) the poetry served as a source of data; and (c) the poetry also served as vehicle for reflection; and (d) as a discussion guide. As a researcher and as a male primary teacher, one of only a few in PEI, it was important that I include my own perspective in this study. The poetry allowed me to do this.

I considered myself equal with regards to my teaching colleagues and wished to

demonstrate no significant privilege throughout the study. I approached this study with an open minded-spirit that hopefully encouraged the sharing of honest and unhindered views among male teachers. It is hoped that the participants, in recognizing me as a fellow male primary teacher, were forthcoming with their experiences. As a researcher, I believe I remained true to the spirit of the experiences described by the participants.

There was no direct benefit through the implementation of this study other than to meet the final requirements of a Master of Education degree. I do share the same potential benefits that the participants' experience, permitting me to form collaborative and supportive relationships with other male teachers.

Summary

This chapter presented the methodology of this study, I have outlined the methods used and I have described how I addressed trustworthiness. This study employed semi-structured interviews and conversations to collect data from male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island. I have also used my own poetry as a data source. Within this chapter, I have outlined how I ensured data integrity and how I managed data sensitivity. A great deal was made of addressing the needs of the participants and respecting their identities. This chapter also presented the analysis process that was used in this study, the results of which will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Findings

The following sections highlight the major findings of this study. The findings generated from the 13 initial interviews are presented first and represent the focus of this study; these findings heavily influenced the discussion and conclusions of this study. Also presented are the findings from the follow-up conversations and analysis of my own poetry. Throughout this chapter my poetry is also presented and intended to demonstrate how my experiences aligned with those of the participants. As I share excerpts from the interviews I also share the poetry to illustrating parallel experiences (the poetry is found within text boxes). Sixteen of the poems I have submitted align with the narratives shared by the participants throughout the initial interviews and follow-up conversations. Therefore despite this study having only 13 participants (in a traditional sense) this study actually has 14 participants.

Initial interview findings

The findings from the initial interviews are presented below. Statements outlining the findings are presented first, and then excerpts from transcripts help illustrate the findings. Excerpts from the initial interviews are ‘tagged’ by listing the participant’s pseudonym and the transcript page number. This information is found in parentheses immediately following each excerpt. Each conversation is presented using normal text and italicized texts. On all occasions the interviewer's questions are presented using normal text and the participant responses are italicized. A breakdown of the number of times that each participant was quoted in the presentation of the findings can be found in Appendix Q. As previously noted, the excerpts are organized thematically, the themes are consistently linked to the concepts from the literature

review and emerging 'new' themes that surfaced throughout the interview process (Appendix O).

Workspace experience and professional relationships. Exploring and coming to understand the workplace experiences of men who teach at the primary level in Prince Edward Island is a major goal of this research. The category “workspace experience and professional relationships” is a broad category highlighting the overall professional experience of these men and examines the professional relationships these men engage in.

Eleven of 14 participants described their professional relationships with their colleagues as consistently positive, having very little to share that would suggest negative working relationships with colleagues:

We have a good tight knit group down there. We all respect each others space and we all know that we have our own lives so we're not glued together at teacher functions or stuff like that. We know how to have a good laugh in the staff room and lighten things up when someone's having a bad day (Alex, p. 2).

Overall how would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?
Oh it's great. Very positive, it's a wonderful building. We laugh together and share our lives and that makes this place a better place to work. (Charlie, p. 4-5).

Yeah definitely had a good experience in my first school. I was there for ten weeks and I had a positive relationship with all of the teachers. I might not have agreed with all of them but I still had a good relationship them, I never had any issues with any of them or any other teachers or anything like that. (Morgan, p. 4).

Great. I'm an easy going person, I have no trouble socializing with other teachers and I get along with everybody right from administration down (Jordan, p. 4).

Nine of 14 men described their overall workplace experience as positive and comfortable. These finding are represented by the following examples:

It is an interesting experience but I think it is something you can easily get accustomed to.
So did you feel tempted to sit back or are you pretty relaxed about going to interact?

I was pretty relaxed, it was a small school so it was welcoming (Morgan, p. 5).

I doesn't bother me the least bit. I don't feel outnumbered and if I have something to say I'm going to bring it up and I don't have any trouble with that (Jordan, p. 5).

How do you find it working in an environment mostly comprised women?
I didn't know how I would take it, but now I think I like it - I enjoy it. That's not to say that it wouldn't be nice to have a few more guys around here. They're all very nice and easy to talk to and they've all warmed up to me as I've warmed up to them. I enjoy it (Casey, p. 3).

What was the workspace like for you when it was mostly women?
It was a school that I went to as child and I grew up in the community so I knew everyone so I didn't worry about that and it didn't bother me. I knew everyone supported me because they knew me and I knew them. Overall a very positive atmosphere among my colleagues. As they retired it took some time build new relationships but overall it was positive (Riley, p. 4).

Even though the majority of men felt quite comfortable and supported in working at the primary level, a consistently comfortable experience was not unanimous. Four men described situations where discomfort existed:

It can be uncomfortable when you're that only one, like you're the black sheep in the corner. What do you have in common though really? Especially someone my age; you go into a lot of staff rooms and well I'm not female, I don't have children, what do we have in common?

Does it affect your day?

No not really, but of course going to a school where you're comfortable makes it easier to look forward to (Joe, p. 5).

I walked into the staff room one day and I just sat there by myself because my cooperating teacher was doing something and I just sat, ate my lunch, no one said a word. I'm not an outwardly going person when I don't know people so I left and I don't think I went back very often unless my teacher was there with me. So where would you go?

I'd hangout in the classroom, my teacher often hung out in the classroom too so we would usually hang out in the class... we marked stuff, I found myself watching the kids in the school yard. The staffroom thing I didn't care about, because I was thinking well I'm not going to be back here! But overall it made me not really want to sub there that's for sure, I had no desire to go back and

sub. I don't know, it was shocking I guess; I expected it to be more welcoming than it was (Sid, p. 6).

Parachute

Out of the corner of my eye I see it.
Down the hall, past the big room, through the doors it approaches.
And then it is upon me; advice.

Advice I don't think I need. Advice I don't think I want.
Advice at least not in this form. Parachuted in, as if I am in need of rescuing.
What do you know?
I answered your question.
Why would you assume something else. You haven't set foot inside in months.
No thank you, your ideas, this time, are wasted.
Your suggestion, I find hurtful.
I will approach this topic on my own.

"I'm here to help"
That is what you said.
Advice? My turn!
Review your job description!
Your ideas cause me stress.
Cause discomfort in my chest and I can't accept.
You are here, I know, to help elsewhere.
Yet you seem to only judge.

My battle, the current challenge is one I will not share with you.
This mountain, which I love to climb, is one for me.
One for me to share with whom I choose.
Your advice seems smug, off-target, I say "flag on the play."

Woven into these stories about workplace and relationships emerged narratives about troubling or conflicted relationships among professionals. As described in the literature review these conflicted relationships often manifested themselves as "being attended to" by others or in other words, being looked after whether the receiver wanted assistance or not. It should be noted that within this study this occurrence was very rare and only two men described situations where 'attending to' occurred. It should also be noted these 'attending to' occurrences were both experienced by men and delivered by men and were not always rooted in notions of gender

stereotyping as is described in the literature review.

During my lessons she would jump in and we'd team teach without me realizing we are team teaching. So that bothered me a bit. Compared to everyone else in the program I probably taught the least.

So when she was jumping in on your lessons or making you feel weary about your style, do you think it was simply about individuals having conflict over teaching style or do you think it's more of a generalization about being a man and teaching?

No, I probably would agree with that, I think males are less sensitive to noise than females are, I think that's an actual thing. She mentioned the whole motherly thing. She thought noise was negative, she would always picture her kids crying and stuff, whatever the hell that meant I don't know. But to be honest it was the fact that she's old school teacher where I'm taught all this new stuff like group work, collaboration, 21st century learning. So I can handle more unorganized work other than always in your desk, quiet, working (Sid, p. 6).

Class Profile

Every year we do a class profile.

List all those who are serviced...

Counseling

EAL

ENIP

Resource

Reading Recovery...

...Reading Recovery: 6. 6?

Seems a high number?

What do they think?

Am I, in their eyes, one of those?

One of those needing taken care of?

Alternatively, consider the following:

There was one teacher who I didn't necessarily agree with the way she dealt with her students. We had experiences together because she was the other grade 3 teacher; we team taught some of our classes together. I taught double science and she taught double social studies and we'd just flip and just from what I learned in school I wasn't a fan of the way she taught my students social studies. She might not have been a fan of the way I taught her students science but I mean different strokes right.

Was it a difference in management skills or was it a difference in the way she taught?

It was just regurgitation to the students. I think at that level they kind of need to be involved with it and get their hands on it; It was just lecturing. I may have taught my class a bit of social studies instead of science on a day they had at test. I never talked to her about the lesson that I did or said anything about it, I just kind of went under her. I just didn't feel that my students were ready for it so I thought I should prepare them. (Morgan, p. 3- 4).

Seven participants expressed views about the need for more male teachers at the primary level. Consider the following examples where the participants explain that they feel more men at the primary level is important:

Why do you feel that way, why do you feel it's important?

I see the conversations that I have with kids and it really opens my eyes to see how they talk to me and it's because I'm that only male that they've had the opportunity to share those things with. There is another male teacher in the Junior high section, but the kids in grades 1-6 are not comfortable walking up that hallway let alone going to speak to a junior high teacher who they don't know. So I'm really the only person they come to, whether it's talking about the little things like the basketball game they played in after school or what they're doing in intramurals. It seems to be all females who are having these conversations with kids and I really like to think that there could be a better balance. (Sam, p.7).

So when 'they' talk about wanting more men in the school and I know you can't really speak for them, do you think it's mostly just about the students or is it also a staff issue; that it's nice to have a balance?

I think a lot of them mean it's good for the students but for the staff as well - to have a mixture. I mean there's only two of us at the school who are males so... but you just hope that more men get into the education program and have the interest in the primary level. I thought it was really cool that we got a male teacher in Kindergarten I think that's great, it's really neat. (Jordan, p. 7).

Becoming a primary teacher. All participants were asked to describe how they came to be teachers. Specifically the participants were asked to expand on the influences that informed their decision to enter the teaching profession. They were also asked to outline their journey from teacher training to present teaching status and finally they were asked to describe the support or

discouragement they may have received on their journeys to becoming teachers. The preservice teachers were asked to focus on their journey from their decision to enter teacher training to their current academic situation as student teachers.

With regards to support and discouragement 12 participants clearly described how other people supported their decision to enter K-3 teaching. Much of this support originated from family members and close friends and in some cases other teachers offered support. This support is represented by the following excerpts:

In my family my father was never against our decisions, my parents were very proud of me. They were extremely proud of me but they never interfered with my decision. My father trusted me I guess. (Gerry, p. 3).

It was definitely full-hearted support on their behalf. They always thought it was a good thing to pursue. My aunt was definitely supportive; she's a teacher and she thought it would be a great idea. Pretty much every family member thought it was a great idea for me to be a teacher so I sort of went with it. (Morgan, p. 1).

What about your closest friends are they surprised when they heard you're were teaching grade 2?

No... they were at first, they'd say 'I wouldn't want that,' but a lot of my friends are teachers and they know some people are suited for this grade and some people are suited for that grade.

So all supportive overall?

Yeah, very supportive and they're not surprised that I do well. (Alex, p.1).

When you decided to pursue early childhood education, did you get a lot of support or discouragement from friends and family?

Initially everyone was like 'what!' Because men in early childhood are rare and I think I was the only certified male early childhood educator on PEI for a while. I didn't know that when I made the decision to enter the field, I knew there was probably not many men and then when I got into the training I was amazed. A lot of people thought it was great that had made this decision and my friends were shocked, but then they took a moment to think about my personality and they were like ' OK that fits, that works for you. '
(Don, p. 1).

It was definitely full-hearted support, I think they always thought it was a good

thing to pursue. My aunt was definitely supportive, she's a teacher and she though it would be a great idea, pretty much every family member thought it was a great idea for me to be a teacher so I sort of went with it. I have friends that are teachers currently and some that are in the program with me now or in different programs throughout Atlantic Canada so I think the support was definitely there. They all seem to think that it's very positive program and positive sort of job so or kind of career I guess. (Morgan, p.1).

Despite experiencing much support the same men often experienced forms of discouragement regarding their decision to enter teaching at the primary level. Six men described situations where they experienced subtle or implicit discouragement related to their decisions to enter teaching at the K-3 level or teaching in general. Such discouragement is represented by the following responses:

There was no discouragement from friends and family but I felt more glaring eyes within the schools in the system, like; 'Oh it's a male in the primary, how's he going to make out? Is he here just because it's an open position?' You felt that but did you hear any comments from anyone? No, no comments, but I had comments when I first started substituting. I'd only be asked to do upper elementary, junior high, and high school until they were stuck and then I proved that I could hang with the 6-year-olds for a full day and do quite well at it. (Alex, p. 1).

A lot of people I've talked to, not necessarily my friends, who teach higher grades say they could never do this job because they couldn't actually have conversations with them which is totally bogus in my opinion... A few people that I know who are teachers said they don't get paid enough. Younger teachers, three to five years in say that it's a lot of hard work and you don't necessarily get the recognition but I'm not stupid I knew that going into it. The fact is teachers are under appreciated all over the place - but that's fine (Sid, p. 1).

Well... the very rare person said 'oh how can you make a living teaching. Are you going to burn out?' Just little things like that. (Jamie, p. 2).

Of the men interviewed, two men described situations where they experienced explicit discouragement from entering teaching at the K-3 level, their experiences are described below:

Twice while on practicum I ran into situations with two very head-strong middle

aged women. One who I now call a colleague and a friend and I've moved past that situation but the other situation was very negative. You know I was a young guy wanting to teach kindergarten, a single guy with no kids, many times she said snide comments like: What would I know about children? What's this guy know? Who is he to tell me about what's appropriate for this age group, he doesn't know a thing about kids? Who is he? Where is he coming from? A lot of the negativity, that attitude that she had really did impact me. (Don, p. 2).

My colleagues at the high school thought I had lost it. Why would you do that? They told me I would work way too much. They told me I would wipe butts and noses and I would be tying shoes and they questioned whether or not primary teaching is really teaching - they thought it was babysitting. Some of them went to the point of telling me it was a job for women and told me that I shouldn't be there. They said that I had way too many skills... I was told I would lose those skills. They told me I would be wasting these skills and no child would benefit and I still question that. (Charlie, p. 3).

For the majority of the men interviewed, primary teaching was not their first career choice, eight men described how primary teaching was a secondary career choice. Evident by the following excerpts:

I did all my studies in French literature and in my mind I was going to teach at the university level. (Gerry, p. 1).

What grade level are you teaching?

French Immersion Kindergarten, I took grades 8 through 12 training at University, I had it in my head that I wanted to teach junior high, at the time I didn't think of elementary let alone kindergarten. (Casey, p. 1).

I grew tired of teaching junior high and dealing with the same issues all the time. It had nothing to do with the children, children will be children with different needs, you do the best you can. My children at that time were still very young and that was demanding, the fact that I was travelling added to it, so I stopped for a year. I decided to take a year off - I wasn't happy so I put the brakes on to re-evaluate. I went back to university and took all the courses I needed to take to teach primary. (Charlie, p. 1).

Only two men described how primary teaching was their original career choice;

In late high school I was exposed to the ideas of teaching and learning that are found in early childhood education. One day I walked in and saw the way

teaching was happening at that level and it really kind of caught my interest... I learned that this style of teaching [play-based/inquiry driven] was being used in kindergarten so at that point I decided I wanted to teach kindergarten. (Don, p. 1).

I did have an option in the second year to try a different level or maybe a speciality but I wanted to get more experience and strengthen my skills at the elementary level / primary level because that's where I wanted to teach. (Jordan, p. 1).

With regards to the factors that influenced their decisions to enter primary teaching, ten men described situations where their decisions were made during transitional phases of their lives. These transitional phases included the immediate years following high school, during post-secondary study, or during the years that immediately followed their post-secondary study. These three situations are represented by the following passages:

I taught overseas before I knew what I wanted to do when I grew up. That kind of opened my eyes to wanting to become a teacher. Over there you teach from two-year-olds to 92-year-olds and I enjoyed teaching the very young students, I knew it was always a possibility to teach the younger ages I guess. When I came back from Japan and I got into the education program at Acadia and was in the K-6 program and did some practicums in Grade 1-2-3 and really enjoyed it so that kind of opened my eyes a little more. (Jamie, p. 1).

During university after my third year I decided to go work with WUSC and I worked in international development in Africa for 18 months teaching about family planning. Loved the experience and that's where the passion started. I decided I really wanted to do this and if I could teach in a country with limited resources then just imagine what you could do if you did have resources like pencils and an actual school to go to. (Charlie, p. 1).

Well I did my science degree at UNB, and I kind of thought about teaching throughout those years so I did the courses I needed to take [to keep education open as an option]. I didn't go into education right away, I moved to Halifax and decided to do something completely different and so I did that for about two years and then decided I wanted to come back to teach.

What were you doing in Halifax?

I took biological engineering which is completely the extreme opposite end of the spectrum and then I worked in a lab here in town. (Joe, p. 1).

Despite the prevalence of transitional influences, nine men also described how there were early life influences that informed their decision to enter primary teaching, consider the following:

My mom told me that after my first day of school I came home and said 'I know what I want to do when I grow up' I said I'll be a teacher and I never changed my mind. (Gerry, p. 1).

Sort of always wanted to be a teacher, I think I enjoyed school growing up, so I sort of fell into it... I had a few family members who were teachers and they seemed to really enjoy it and I just sort of wanted their kind of jobs and their lifestyle. I think they always seemed to be enjoying their experiences at school. (Morgan, p. 1).

I'm the oldest of three kids in my family, I remember when I was really young I really took to helping my younger brother and sister with their school work. That was my way of feeling good about myself and to give myself some confidence and I received some praise from mom and dad for that too. So that really got the ball going for me. (Sam. p.1).

Three participants also highlighted certain individuals who in some way positively influenced their decision to enter primary teaching, consider this example:

My first teaching job was grade 6 and at that point you just take the first teaching job you get. Eventually the principals I worked for, John MacSwain and Alan Smith, kind of said I would be suited for the younger grades so I started teaching a grade 2/3 split in Egmont Bay four years ago and really enjoyed it and stuck with it. (Alex, p. 1).

Student relationships. During the interviews, the participants were asked to comment on their relationships with their students. Specifically the participants were asked to describe how they demonstrated care for their students. As the discussions progressed, the male primary teachers were also asked to comment on their comfort level regarding hugging students as a way to demonstrate care. None of the participants offered their perspective regarding hugging without

being prompted by the interviewer, instead the participants, in all but one case, described relationship building through ongoing mutual respect as their means to demonstrate care.

Demonstrating care through relationship building and mutual respect is represented by the following accounts:

Happy Bracelet

The day after, I,
in private frustration with veins shuttering, mutter:
I hate my job, I hate my job, I hate my job.

That following day she, while the other kids readied their day,
pulled me aside.

"It's a bracelet, it's for you."

"I made it at youth group, it will make you happy."

I didn't know what to say, did she see it all unfold yesterday or did I show it.

It was a simple 5 beaded bracelet.

She explained...

"One for sin."

"One for sacrifice."

"One for resurrection."

"One for peace."

"Last one for happiness."

A small gesture from an amazing little person.

I hold it close.

It reminds me that some things are more important than others.

It has taught me how to...

It reminds me how to...

Care

I took the time to be there for them from grade 1 through 6. Even on duty I would always try to make that connection. I always wanted them to know that; they as a person is what is most important not school. (Riley, p. 4).

I show affection to my students by treating them fairly and by having positive relationships. I was not afraid to talk to them about issues that they might deem important and just being able to be there for them - but I'm not be the lovey-dovey type character. (Morgan, p. 7).

I create a nurturing and safe environment where they can express what they think and talk to me. We laugh when it's time to laugh and play when it's time to play. I

call this class a family and I work that way. Some days we're are upset with behaviours but we all still like each other. I never brush off a child or never raise my voice I don't believe in that. Very much about creating a mutual respect, if I don't respect them then they won't respect me. (Charlie, p. 4).

My philosophy of teaching is very humanistic. I like to create good rapport and relationships with the children. I always try to be myself. I tell my parents that the person they meet is the person their children will experience in the classroom. I'm no different, I don't want to play a role, I'm not an actor. What they see in the classroom is what they see outside. I share with my students. I tell them about the things I do, the programs I watch, and the books I read. They know a lot about me, they know about my family and my kids. I just want to be transparent. You don't cheat with little kids. They discover very quickly if you're honest. That's what they're like, you have to be honest. You cannot tell them lies they will discover this... they feel, they sense. (Gerry, p. 4).

With regards to hugging students, each participant described one of three viewpoints. Two participants described themselves as being forthcoming with hugs as a means to demonstrate care and initiated hugs willingly. Four participants described themselves as someone who avoids hugging students. Finally, four men described themselves as receivers of hugs; where they would hug their students when one was initiated by their students. These three perspectives are illustrated below:

I'm the kind of teacher who will give a hug if a student is upset. Take Kleenex and give it to them to dry their eyes if they are crying whether it's a boy or a girl. I also give high fives and knuckles and that type of thing with both boys and girls. I think giving them a hug or a pat on the back is a way to show them that I really do care. That's what I do. If a student was upset and needed support, perhaps a pat on the back or a hug I would do. They're still young kids. I know that when you're down in the dumps or something is going wrong it's nice to get a pat on the back or a hug; it does make you feel better to know that someone cares. (Jordan, p. 3)

I do keep my distance, but on purpose, so I usually just do high fives – it's more or less just to protect myself and I am aware of that. I'm a little apprehensive to give hugs. (Jamie, p. 5).

My family wasn't a huggy family so going into schools I would never hug, I would mostly do high fives or use words.

Was that a consequence of the way things were in your family or were you conscious of not dishing out the hugs?

I don't know. Even with younger people in my family now I'm not huggy. I don't know why. It's not something that I consciously think... 'oh I can't hug.'

Do you receive hugs?

From kids oh yes, They give you hugs and you pat them on the back or the arm and say thank you, you know. As an elementary teacher you get hugs regardless of whether you're expecting them or not. (Riley, p. 4).

Two male teachers offered the following cautions regarding hugging as a justification for not actively giving out hugs to their students.

I give my kids high fives all the time to show affection because you've got to protect yourself when you're a public school teacher. You hear the horror stories where an appropriate touch was misinterpreted and it gets blown out of proportion when really it was a teacher hugging a student to congratulate them or something. That's the ultimate fear; to be caught in that type of situation. (Don, p. 5).

...this summer a girl who was in grade 5 came to give me a hug and her mom was there. I kind of turned off of it a bit because I wasn't sure what her mom would have thought of a male hugging a younger girl student. (Sid, p. 3).

Three teachers highlighted ongoing concerns that some male teachers have regarding hugging.

Do you think because of being a male you're more susceptible?

Absolutely, absolutely. I understand why some people are nervous about things happening to their children because of the world we live in. We are constantly bombarded by stories like this but people have to understand that even though we see the negative experiences on the news there are millions of teachers and students out there who have positive experiences. I try to convey to families and everyone that I'm a safe person. I try to teach them about personal space too, you know some of them run up and half tackle me and I teach them that such actions may invade my personal space. So if you want to hug somebody it's a good idea to ask them first to make sure it's all right. Like this year I have a girl who would hug anyone she met and I have one little guy who can't stand being touched. So I try to teach them it's OK to hug but it's OK to say no. I never turn down a hug because if you turn one down it could be the only hug a child ever gets that day. When you think about it like that, it's hard to turn down a hug from a child. I'm not a teacher who lets children sit on my knee and I know that is absolutely

because I am a man in this field. I know I'm creating a tense situation for a parent who walks through that door. It's a shame we live in that world but it's something I've accepted. (Don, p. 5).

It's interesting I hear about both perspectives, those who are comfortable hugging and those who are like 'NO NO NO'....

Yeah I did the those things like: when being alone with a student make sure someone else is nearby or made sure the door is open... I was aware of all that but if a kid needed a hug the kid needed a hug. (Robin, p. 4).

Side Tackle

I hug my students everyday.
Not all of them, some are not huggers.
One insists on a handshake.
There are a few that love to give a hug at the end of the day.
But
I've a new move.
They zig? I zag.

I use this strategy to protect myself,
this is only a recent thing though – an upshot of my increasing awareness.

It's called the side hug.
Looks as if the little 'Ruggers' are side tackling.
It works, it's a tweak, I'm more comfortable.

They get their hug.

Daily routines, socializing, and isolation. Understanding the overall experience of men who teach at the primary level in Prince Edward Island depends on a thorough examination of the social side of the participants' work-life experiences. The findings in this section explore the social side of primary teaching by examining the daily routines and rituals followed by the participants. Also explored is the element of isolation versus companionship within the workplace.

Eight participants shed insight into their daily routines and how these routines relates to their ability to socialize during the day. Some routines facilitated socializing and others presented

barriers to socializing, consider the following daily routines:

I feel there's a lot more work in a day at the primary level.

What about the downtime, what do you find yourself doing / going?

When I had a period off in high-school I go to the staff room, in elementary school there's no down time, you're cleaning up from what you just did and getting ready for the next thing. In elementary school I find I don't go to the staff room as much. Just because of time. I always have something I should be doing or to get ready for. (Joe, p. 3-4).

There's a lot of preparation to do and I usually try to get to the school relatively early; 7:45 wouldn't be unusual to get to school and then your prep-work starts. I've never been involved with days that don't go by fast like It's amazing how fast things go by and sometimes you don't even know what you did at the end of the day. It is a lot of work because you're with them all day. (Morgan, p. 3).

I like going into the kindergarten classrooms to read books to them and to play with them and to talk to them. In grade 1 I help with their writing and help them when they are making their letters, I just walk in and offer my help.

How do the teachers feel when you do this?

They like that, they don't mind. Or sometimes I'll just open the door and walk in and walk around and try not to impose but walk in see what they are doing and say hello on my way out. The teachers, they don't mind. (Gerry, p. 4).

There is a staff area, do I get to go there? No. Maybe once a week I force myself to go there.

Are you confined to the "work" and that's why you can't get to the staff room?

Yes, because you're always on duty.

(Charlie, p. 5).

These facilitating or hindering routines appear important as five men in this study affirmed the importance of socializing within their primary settings. Consider the following perspectives:

I'm not one of those teachers who is going to stay in his room all day. I know there's time where you have to get out and you have to socialize a bit and you have to keep yourself in the right frame of mind as well. All work and no play is going to make it a long day for yourself and your students. (Sam, p. 6).

I get here by 7:15 every day to make sure I have all the materials where they need to be. The next person arrives at 7:40 and it's a lady down the hall and we do

talk. I do socialize with people and that's important that's very important in my day so if there's a chance to talk to other colleagues I do. (Charlie, p. 4).

During recess and lunches I didn't go to the staffroom that much. I mingled some but when I first started there was a group that was close to retirement and then a group that was close to my age and we hung out a lot on our own during our breaks. So we became friends through work and then we started to hang out after work. My prep time was work time so I treated prep time that way but I was also cognisant that you had to be social. There were times where I would hang out and touch base and being in smaller school you had to wear many different hats so you're on different committees leading different initiatives. So on down times you would get up to speed on those things. (Riley, p. 5).

*When the kids are at recess where would someone find you?
In the staff room, I think it's very important to connect with other teachers. (Casey, p. 4).*

Among those men who described their socializing experiences, two men described how they made an effort to socialize with other men on staff. Eight men explained that they wanted more male colleagues in their schools, rationalized partially by a need to fulfil a socializing or companionship need. Consider the following testimonials:

Welcome

I walk in and say my quick hellos.
Snap a quick joke here and there.
Tuck down my hall and into my room.
I sit and think.
I sit and think about the game, the news, and the beauty on last night's 'guy show.'
I don't talk about it, I think.
There's no one to shoot the shit with here.
Silly?
Maybe?
Reality.

*So did you miss that... camaraderie maybe?
I did. At my other school it was half male and half female so all the males would talk about how they work out or play sports so I could do that with them but here there was only a couple males so (Jamie, p. 7).*

When it was two of us it was just myself and the principal, and he was teaching in

the upper end and had his administrative duties so hardly ever saw each other.

When there was just the two of you did you feel isolated at all?

Yeah, there were times when it did (Alex, p. 4).

You mentioned the man next door, is having that relationship important to you?

Yes.

Why?

Just for topics of conversation. I've been in the staff room and they might be talking about a female issue and well you know I have nothing much to say about that (Charlie, p. 4).

I'd rather work in a place where there's a 50/50 split or where there are more men. I'd love to work with more men but in this area of the education world that is not a reality right now (Don, p. 7).

When you had that hour for lunch and everyone is hanging in the staffroom, was it mostly women at that time or was there an even split?

Well at Riverbank there was always a good representation of men among staff, it's one of the reasons why I stayed at the school as long as I did. There pretty well was a male teacher at every grade through the years and that was nice to have (Robin, p. 4).

Researchers suggest that many men find teaching at the primary level a very isolating experience. The men who participated in this study expressed varying opinions regarding the perception that primary teaching is an isolating experience. Five men suggested that teaching at this level was not an isolating experience or if it was isolating, it was not something that bothered them. Consider the following representations:

So do mind when it's mostly women sitting in the staffroom?

No, that's when I have the choice. You know if the conversation is about who they want to date then I don't have to be part of that. Sometimes it is bothersome like when I'd like to talk to someone but there is no one around or when I would like to talk about the hockey game last night. I do try to throw that into the conversations and sometimes they take up that topic but not for very long. Sometimes I turn the tables on them! Every Friday is Treat Day so the staff room is full, on the table there were little tomatoes and I said 'Oh girls you should eat tomatoes, tomatoes are good for your prostate.' They laughed but they got the message because the day before was all female issues (Charlie, p. 5).

So when you were sitting in the staff room and there some women and some men

in the staffroom did you gravitate towards one group?

It didn't matter; whoever was there we would joke around with. Usually when I was in the staff room I was the only male and that doesn't bother me (Joe, p. 1).

Sometimes teachers tell me that they don't like going into staff rooms because they don't fit in or they feel isolated or lonely because they are the only man...

Oh, no, no, no, I'm not that... well last week it just so happens that there was all ladies sitting around the large table talking about all kinds of different subjects. One time they looked at me because they all have babies and they looked at me and pause and would I say 'go ahead' and then we will just start to laugh... No, no, I don't feel embarrassed one bit being with all these laddies (Gerry, p. 7).

You definitely hear a lot of interesting things. You still have to involve yourself. I know you have to put yourself out there you can't stay in your room during some sort of break or function or something like that. You have to get out there and involve yourself just as if it was a room full of men. You really don't want to seclude yourself because then you just don't get up on the latest information or on the news or anything that's going on in the school. It is an interesting experience but I think it is something you can easily get accustomed to (Morgan, p. 4).

Sometimes men choose to isolate themselves from other staff members. Three men described situations where they took deliberate steps to isolate themselves within schools:

You mentioned about sitting in at lunch with the kids, was that to build relationships with your kids or is that kind of a refuge from some other stuff?
Sometimes it's a refuge, sometimes it's to chat with the kids. It depends on the mood in the staff room and what's being talked about, I'll sneak out and I'll go to the classroom to pretend I'm checking my email or just sit and have a chat with the kids (Alex, p. 4).

So when they were talking about their shopping did you feel kind of on the 'outs'?
No, no. They wanted to involve me in the conversation and I could talk shop with them but I really didn't care; I wasn't mean about it I just felt I could spend my lunch hour more meaningful. So half the time I ended up eating in my classroom alone because I didn't want to hear them talking about girl things (Jamie, p. 6).

Challenges; opportunities; and hiring, promotion, and job performance. Teachers, regardless of gender, experience a wide array of challenges and opportunities. Some challenges and opportunities are common and shared by many teachers, yet other challenges and

opportunities are unique and only present themselves to certain individuals. The men who participated in this study described challenges and opportunities before them that were unique to men, and some challenges and opportunities that are shared by many primary teachers – male or female.

Challenges. Twelve participants identified common challenges - challenges that could be encountered by all primary teachers. These challenges are described through the following excerpts:

Dressing Room # 8

Off the ice late, lots of whistles, the clock went slowly.
After the game: I drive a beer into me, hustle my gear into my bag.

“What’s your rush?”
“20 six-year-olds rushing at me in the morning is my rush”
“How hard can it be? Give them a toy and teach the ABC’s!”

With that the door closes behind me.
Laughter fades and is replaced by the hum of the Zamboni.
It’s late, tomorrow is going to come too soon.
They partied on.

This school is an inner city school so there's a lot of broken families, poor families, and unemployed parents. A few parents are in prison and when the kids arrive a lot of them didn't have breakfast. Sometimes we can't provide breakfast within the school on a consistent basis. So I bring in cereal - they've got to eat. The fact that some of my kids have never left the island, some have never been to Charlottetown, and I wonder how can that be in 2011. Books are not a big thing at some homes so all the benefits of reading to children [doesn't happen]... these students arrive here and they are not ready. That is a challenge for me (Charlie, pg. 6).

When I step back and think about what we do as teachers we seem to take on so many things. A lot of times we talk about it with colleagues and everybody seems to be on the same page but we never seem to stand up for ourselves. We need to draw the line here, we can't take all this on... no to this, yes to that - we just seem to take it all on and make the load a little heavier (Sam, p. 7).

The biggest challenge was the new programs that would continuously be rolled out but the resources you needed wouldn't necessarily come with them. There's always times where you have to make this or that or collect this or that and you don't have time. With new programs it's always a one-time thing; the materials are never kept up (Robin, p. 5).

Six men described challenges that they felt were due to the fact that they are men teaching at the K-3 level. The following pieces illustrate these challenges:

Up You Go

It's Friday, a tricky day is underway.
Lots planned, heavy on the management side.
Knock on door.
"Can I borrow your teacher?"
In the hall, pulled aside I learn of my future.
I'm very happy, I'm where I want to be.
But I know my Grade 1 assignment is ending.
I learn I'm upstairs with the Grade 3's.
I wonder...
other than the staffing numbers is there more to my reassignment.

Usually being the only male in the room it is difficult to get listened to. Until you make your point and they're like 'oh this guy knows what he is talking about, he's a primary teacher we've got to give him a little respect like he gives us' (Alex, p. 4).

A few years ago I had a couple of girls who were physically abused by their fathers. That was hard to deal with because that this had happened to them. I questioned why I wasn't told and why they were put in my room. So, somewhere along the road someone decided that I was a good match for them and the decision makers decided that I should demonstrate that not all men are violent. I wished I was part of that conversation so I would have been ready. I found that hard because in the beginning I didn't know why they were not responding to me. Even at the reading table they always sat farthest from me and were very timid. I did everything I could to get them out of their shell and get them to respond to me. I couldn't figure out why they didn't want to read with me, why they were shutting down, I could see them outside happy and playing but totally different in the classroom. I went into the music class and when I walked in you could see their personality just change. (Charlie, p. 6).

Opportunities. Participants also described apparent opportunities within their chosen

career. Four men described opportunities for both male and female primary teachers and nine men commented on specific opportunities that appear to be 'male only' opportunities. The latter fell into one of three categories, and some individuals communicated more than one perspective. First, nine participants recognized and believed opportunities were before them because they were men. A second group, five participants, discussed how other people suggested that they would be presented with opportunities because of their gender. Finally, six participants communicated discomfort with having opportunities before them as a consequence of being men and placed greater emphasis on 'earned' opportunities. The first viewpoint, a belief that opportunities would come their way because of being a man, is described in the passages below:

I like to think our chances of staying here are better but maybe if we're at the bottom of the totem pole and cuts happen we might be first let go. The fact that I'm in the minority then I like think that my principal will want to keep me around because if we get let go and someone else gets hired then chances are they will women. I like to think that my chances are pretty good and doors will open because I am a male at the primary level. (Casey, p. 5).

As a primary teacher can you describe the opportunities that you have?

Meaning?

You being a man at primary and having primary experience do you see it as being an asset for future opportunities?

Oh definitely an asset. It would make it, with my experience, easy to transfer to an administrative role in a primary school. (Alex, p. 5).

I look at it more as an advantage since I can speak English and French and there's not many males in the system. I find I could actually use it as an advantage so that I could get a job easier... Lots of opportunities, there always looking for French and male teachers because there aren't any, big opportunities. (Jamie, p. 7).

Those male teachers who described how other people suggested that they (the participants) would be presented with opportunities because of gender is illustrated through the following pieces:

Token Male 1

Summer vacation,
Beach bound, book in hand.
Stop for gas and snacks.
In line, a familiar face,
She got me my first job, I'm excited to say hi, catch up.

"Oh you're not in Montague?" she asks...
"Hey! She got her male."

I give my friendly, yet not entirely with you, laugh
I pay, wave, smile.
"Enjoy your summer" I say.

Somersaulting in the gulf.
Bocce on the beach.
Sand trapped between pages.
It's on my mind.

I hope that my gender does not work against me. Some people tell me that my gender will work for me.

How do you feel about that?

Well it's not necessarily untrue, so in that case I guess I'm thankful for it. (Don, p. 8).

I've been told that 'Oh you're in the primary level, you're an elementary school teacher, there's not many males in that age level'... So I hope it does help me out along my career and journey but when it comes down to it when the hiring happens they go with who best fits that job whether you're male or female (Jordan, p. 7).

I like to think there are job opportunities for male teachers. People are always saying 'oh you're a male in the elementary stream you should have no problem finding a job' I don't know about that. I think, or like to think that they'll pick the most qualified person regardless of sex but even in the schools there are teachers who tell you there's a need for male teachers. They say that as a male I should have a good opportunity to get employment. I like to think that's the truth, I think there is a need for male teachers in elementary schools. (Riley, p. 6).

Coming in as a science teacher most people say: 'oh you won't be subbing very long, you'll get in in no time'. Then I also hear: 'Oh you should apply for primary or elementary jobs because they'll hire you because you are a man' I always hear these same old stories. (Joe, p. 6).

Hiring, promotion and job performance. Twelve men suggested that they believed they were hired or should be hired on merit - because of qualifications or job performance. Some of the men stated that having career opportunities shouldn't be linked to gender at all (3 men). A second group (3 men) acknowledged that performance should dictate one's opportunities, but if they found themselves personally in a situation where their gender assisted their promotion or hiring, they would embrace such an outcome.

The following excerpts illustrate these conflicting views:

Token Male 2

Am I a token male?
I mean that's what they say
"...the school has it's male."
"...it's good for the students."
"...it's good for the students to see a male role model."

But what about teaching?
Am I not a good teacher?
Shouldn't the school simply have teachers?
Shouldn't the school have a teacher that's good for the students.
Shouldn't the students have good role models period?

It should come down to the actual quality of the teaching, and your interview and what you bring to the table. I don't think me being a man is even relevant to the job at all. It should be based on your actual quality as a teacher. I think principals will hire the best person and the best quality teacher regardless of their gender. (Riley, p. 6).

I believe all the principals who are hiring are looking for the best person for the job or who fits the job, not because you're male or female. (Jordan, p. 7).

Versus:

Like I still think that as a male teacher I might fit the demographic or the type of person they are looking for, but at the same time I'm still going to be qualified and I hope that I'm the most qualified. I can't help it if that's what the principal or whoever is looking for, if he has in his head that he wants male. (Morgan, p. 6).

I'd like to think I'd be hired on by my experience and what I could bring to the school and whether maleness impacts on that or not I don't know. I think maybe being a male might have had something to do with my first job - with the very low male population in the school. Now with my experience, I wouldn't worry about it. (Alex, p. 5).

Everybody in my position wants to be on this career path - to be employed. So yes you think oh well [employed because of being man] that's OK but at the same time you want it to be based on you and your skills not your gender. So it's a toss-up, but ultimately you want it because you are good at your job. (Joe, p. 5).

Role modelling. One widely held belief is that more men should be working in the primary grade levels because they are needed to fulfil a male role modelling void for young children, particularly for boys. As noted in the literature review this notion, that more men are required to fulfil a role modelling responsibility, is a complex issue that sometimes troubles male primary teachers. However, what do the male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island think about the expectations around role modelling?

Of the 14 participants, ten welcomed the idea of being a role model and felt unburdened by 'added pressure' associated with role modelling responsibilities.

The following responses are representative of those ten men who welcomed role-modelling:

What are your thoughts regarding being a role model?
I look at it as a wonderful opportunity and it's an advantage that I have. I feel I enter the classroom in September knowing that the kids are looking forward to working with me and that's what it's all about and that's even before I've said anything. They come into my class with a smile on their face and can't wait to be there because of who I am. If I'm honest enough and I'm doing the job that I think I need to do and when the kids are coming in with that attitude then I feel I have a leg up on others.

You don't feel that that is an added responsibility or a burden?
Absolutely not. (Sam, p. 4).

Do you consider yourself to be a role model?

I certainly hope so, yes.

Do you think you might have more of an impact on boys vs. girls or is there a distinction? *Perhaps boys I'm thinking. The majority of my students who lived with parents who were split lived with their mother. So not having a male presence at home and spending six hours with me, gave me quite an opportunity to model manners and behaviour and ways to learn. I think that I opened their eyes to what a male/father figure would look like.*

So you think it's important?

I do definitely because it goes back to the fact that there are those children in broken homes who don't have the male [father] figure. I think there needs to be more of us out there. We're definitely outnumbered in schools... teachers have told me it's great just to have the presence in the school. Some of those teachers have had those students before and they know that those students could really use a male role model in their lives.

Do you find that that puts added pressure on you?

No, I like the challenge, no I don't feel pressure. I'm just myself and I try to build that relationship with that student and give them what they might perhaps be missing in their lives for that six hours of a day. (Jordan, p. 7).

How do you feel about being a role model?

I think it's great, I love it. I remember my kindergarten teacher plain as day, so if these 14 kids remember me when they're adults then I think that's pretty cool and if I can have a positive influence on their lives than that's wonderful. (Casey, p. 3).

Regarding the whole notion of role modelling do you feel you are a role model?

I hope I am.

Is that something you embrace or is it an added responsibility, or an extra pressure?

No I embrace that, that is who I am. (Charlie, p. 4).

How do you feel about being a role model? Would you think of it as a burden or an opportunity?

No, I'd think it would be a positive, any chance you get... maybe there's that one student who just needs that one person to make that one difference, I'd welcome that, not run from it. (Joe, p. 2).

Three participants did not welcome the idea of being a role model.

The View

We chat and laugh.

“You must be learning so much about your wife with us?”

“Yeah, it’s just like The View here!”

“You’re doing well to put up with us everyday...

but we do need more of you...

the children need more men in these halls,

they need to see role models.”

I’m happy.

I’m comfortable with that, and I agree...

Then I get into this research thing, and I worry...

What am I really teaching them?

What role do you want me to model?

What modeling am I doing?

And I wish I could have 8 years of teaching back.

As a male teacher myself, I often get told that I am going to be a good role model for them. How do feel about that?

That's a foolish amount of pressure. Like when you look at the family situations of the kids that we deal with we see at least one parent who's not a good role model. Unfortunately it's usually the men in their lives but sometimes it's also the women. I don't like the idea of me being a role model because I don't feel what I am doing is any better than what other people are trying to do. Most people are trying to do what's best for their children. I'm not looking at the children and thinking that I'm going to be a role model for you because you are lacking that in your life. I'm trying to be consistent, respectful, and there for the children when I'm needed. We're all role models, all teachers are role models and we should all be modelling appropriately for our students. (Don, p. 4).

You mentioned pressure.

Oh yes, there was all these people always saying that it was a great thing to have a man working with these younger students. I'm thinking: OK that's a lot of pressure, and I'm thinking: What happens if I flop? Does this mean that I'm the only influence that they had? (Riley, p. 3).

Male tasking and stereotyping. Men who teach at the primary level often experience stereotyping, exhibit stereotypes themselves, or observe other people expressing stereotypical views. The stories shared by the participants contained various forms of stereotyping that ranged

from rather benign perceptions about the rationale behind the calls for male teachers to potentially harmful views that might cause men to question their role as teachers.

Nine participants in this study described situations where stereotyping existed, sometimes describing more than one experience. Eight men, through the content of the narratives they shared, or directly through stated beliefs demonstrated how they themselves reinforced stereotypes. Four men shared experiences where they were stereotyped by other people.

The following passages illustrate reinforced stereotypes at the hands of male primary teachers themselves, most – not all – of the listed passages below refer to male and female teachers as having different teaching approaches – a stance that has been contended by many researchers.

I've always thought there should be some sort of incentive, something to encourage young men to the elementary levels.

So you feel it's important?

Extremely important.

Why?

I just think you need to have that balance, I think you need the males and the females to balance things out.

More representative of society, kind of thing?

Representative of society and I think it keeps the everyday operation of the school on an even keel...

Are you talking about squabbles?

I'm just talking about the general running of the school... I think I've noticed that males can be a little bit more flexible in their everyday handling of the classroom. I find we're not necessarily as driven as far as the content and the curriculum and everything. We seem to play around with it more. (Robin, p. 4).

Men and women are different in a lot of ways. Male teachers and female teachers are different in a lot of ways. I didn't have a male teacher until I was in grade 7 and I didn't know - we didn't know how to take him. We didn't know how to take his sense of humour. So there was a lot of like 'Whoa, why is he saying it like that?' It was just his communication style, we were used to very sweet little old ladies teaching us... And then we get this man who was a great teacher but it was so foreign to us and every year he had a hard time because the students didn't

know how to take him. We were used to grandmotherly stuff, he was a guy he talked about guy stuff, it was different. (Don, p. 6).

So do you think there's a difference in the way that we kind of do stuff?
Yeah, I think so, but the longer I'm in school I think the students get used to the way I deal with things more. They know they are not going to get a 'Oh dear, Oh honey it's going to be alright' it's going to be a pat on the back toughen up; leave the drama at home. (Alex, p. 7).

I think it's just that females tend to be more motherly and nurturing and what not and males are not, so we take a different approach to it. (Joe, p. 4).

I think, it's stereotypical, but women are for sure more touchy-feely than men are. (Sid, p. 8).

I'm nurturing to an extent but I'm more nurturing like a father-figure than like a mother-figure (Casey, p. 4).

I certainly see some of the things that I can bring to the classroom that female teachers may not whether its just a conversation about things that are going on outside school or how you address certain issues (Sam, p. 6).

TV Teacher

Getting ready for work, on the TV I see 'another.'
Some PD broadcast, maybe distance education. Topic: Guided Reading.
Unusual I think, he's doing a good job but not quite like Fountas & Pinnell
Then, I think something else...a small twinge...

How gay is that!
Do I sound and look that way?

I've surprised myself.

What did I just think? Did I say it out loud?

Because I am aware of the research I am ashamed...
Because it's wrong I am ashamed...

but it's true I don't want to 'show' that way.
I am caught.
I, in thinking, demonstrate what others wrongly think.
I, in thinking, wish to portray differently, to change what they may think.

The next perspective demonstrates potentially harmful stereotyping of male primary

teachers:

In the beginning when you heard that primary teaching was a female job, how did that make you feel?

At the beginning I was questioning my own judgement - did I do the right thing? When I was taking my courses there was like four guys and 60 ladies. So the picture that I had painted was yeah this is mostly for females. The professors were all females. When I did my practicum I was the only guy. So when those people were saying it was a female job, I was wondering if it was real. It was hard to decide if that was reality. Once I got in there I realized I do more than wipe noses. But there was a lot of stereotypes.

Did you experience that stereotyping within your practicum?

Yes, one lady gave me a list of things that I shouldn't do. I thought it was disturbing at the time, so no touching, no sitting on my lap and I recognize the lap thing I mean we just don't do that but if a child is upset and needs consoling what was I to do? She said because I was a male I should not do anything. (Charlie, p. 2-3).

Stereotypes sometimes become engrained in the day-to-day operations of our schools. For many men, such stereotypical views manifest themselves by what some researchers call “manly” tasks – tasks assigned to men working within schools because of the fact that these individuals are men. The following examples illustrate these tasks, such tasking was described or affirmed by nine participants.

Do you ever get asked to do certain tasks within the building because you are a man?

I'm responsible for all the boys' bathrooms.

So go pull this guy out go check on that guy?

Yes

Anything else?

If there are rumours about fights on the playground I get to go and check that out. (Charlie, p. 7).

Were there any specific tasks within the school that you were asked to do because you are the male teacher in the school, like for example lift this heavy box?

Sure, all the time. Actually just today I was looking through the top drawer of my desk and I found a little gripper that you might use to open a tight lid. Kids are coming down to me every day to open up little Thermoses because mom and dad really cranked it on in the morning. I struggle to open them too but because I am

one of a few male teachers in the school they just assume that you can open it. It's funny that you ask that because I had a conversation with another female teacher there last week. We were laughing because the kids in her class are the ones coming to me to open this and open that and I'm telling her the last couple were getting tighter and tighter, but it's just something to laugh at. (Sam. p. 7).

Not all 'manly' tasks are linked to stereotyping some are merely a consequence of the demographics within schools and are sometimes practical in nature:

Sex Ed.

Sex Ed? By default, I teach it...
Women are not supposed to teach the boys, it's an extra class in June.
I don't mind, the boys enjoy it, they'd rather this than algebra in June.

Family life is something that I've been asked to teach in elementary. I teach grade 3 but I've taught sexuality to the grade 6 boys for a number of years now. I'm comfortable with that and I don't mind but again the only reason I've been asked to do this is because I'm the male teacher. Also, our school has a Roots of Empathy program and having had our daughter Sarah 17 months ago, my wife, was asked to participate in Roots of Empathy while on her maternity. A couple of weeks went by and then they came and said... we're having it here at the school and you're the dad, we've never had a dad in the program before would you be willing? (Sam, p. 7).

Five men embraced this 'tasking' and saw no harm in it, while one participant described a situation where he was bothered by the fact that men are asked to do specific tasks. The following exchange illustrates situations where men could be bothered or annoyed by being assigned 'manly' tasks or asked to assume some 'manly' roles:

Is there anything that you've been asked to do or assigned to do in this school that you feel...

Move this table! Set up the TV! Show the other teacher how to use the projector. They're lucky I'm a tech savvy guy. I'm used to AV technical work. I know how to do that stuff and I don't mind doing it because I know how to do. I know there are male teachers who don't know jack about AV stuff and get asked because it's assumed to be a male thing - that's unfair. You hear: 'give me a hand with this and that' 'give me a hand with that table and setting up those chairs.' I have just as much work to do as everyone else in this school so why am I 'the go to guy' for

this stuff. There are people who are very good to not ask me to do that stuff, like the principal and the VP. I think they are conscious of that because they never suggest I should help with that kind of stuff. But some other teachers: Where's Don at? Don we need your muscles, we need this or that. It's a bit frustrating because there are many legal rules about what we're allowed to lift, God forbid I get hurt. When our Kindergarten equipment was finally delivered to the school the truck driver was being a bit difficult so I just started unloading. After I was told by certain teachers that I shouldn't have done that. They said if I was to get hurt I'd be screwed, yet those same teachers are after me to move tables for them three weeks later. Why aren't you asking the person across the hall to help you? Why did you walk all the way down here to the other side of the school to get me to help you move a table? But I do help and I tell them that I have a bad back and I've told them if I say no it's not because I don't want to it's because my back is sore. (Don, p. 9).

The following passages offer the different perspective, where men embrace gender 'defined' tasks, or where they were not bothered by the idea that men in school should or could assume certain roles because of being men:

*Oh yes, I've been asked to lift TVs and tables. The school was putting together this book room last week. I wasn't asked but one job was to move this shelf and we (the other male teacher) jumped to help. We were not asked we just assumed it was our duty to do so.
Like a gentlemanly thing?
Yes, exactly. (Casey, p. 5).*

Being the lone male in this wing are you asked to do things because you are a man?
*Well of course if you're talking about pushing something heavy or moving things, of course yes. I will move shelves around and I don't mind doing that at all. I will move other things for teachers; like this morning our music teacher was moving a TV on a cart and it was very heavy and I offered to help, so I pushed the cart and took it to the room. Then I organized everything for her. Yes they ask me to do such things; to move things around and I offer myself... sometimes I just offer my help.
It's about being a gentleman?
Exactly, I'll do this, I'll carry this box for you. (Gerry, p. 6-7).*

*I'm not the traditional manly man so no one really asked me to do carpentry or anything like that, they knew me.
What about asking you to come and carry books?*

*No but they would joke about it sometimes; like ask me and then say never mind.
You know tongue and cheek joking.
That ever bother you?
No, no! Like I said they knew me ever since I was a young child and the custodian
and I had a good relationship so we teased each other about that stuff quite a bit.
A joke is a joke. (Riley, p. 6).*

Fatherhood. As noted in the literature review, questions regarding male teachers and their ability to nurture children swirl within the greater debate regarding the need for more male teachers. Some researchers have argued that men and women are equally capable of caring for children, while others stress that some men, fathers in particular, have more effective nurturing influences. Four men in this study offered a personal glimpses into their family life, they explained how fatherhood has affected their teaching. Consider the following four excerpts about fatherhood and the role that fatherhood plays in teaching and perhaps the nurturing of children:

Truck Play

I get ready to go to the grocery store.
I'm taking my 21 month old.
He wants to play instead of being belted in.
While parked I let him play.
He loves the controls up front.
He grabs and turns and pushes and pulls.
He's just playing but
It is our new truck and those levers are plastic.
I tell him, maybe a bit animated, NO!
He looks, grins, laughs, and does it again.
I need to remind myself to ignore this and not respond.
I need to be animated on the positives.
I remind myself I should do this with my class.

Having Sarah, has that made you a different teacher?
Absolutely, I don't know how my tendencies are any different but my mind set certainly is. Every student that I look at now - I think that's someone's son, that someone's daughter. Before I thought student X is still a responsibility of mine and need to do my best to provide care for or guide those kids but now I certainly look at if differently (Sam, p. 7).

Do find having your own children has made you a better teacher with young kids

or has it changed your approach a little bit?

I hate to say but it hasn't improved any. Before I had kids the kids I taught were number one. You'd go home and you'd think about what they were doing. What was going to go on the next day, was this kid doing alright, are they going to have lunch tomorrow? I find when I had my own kids I thought less about that; I was more concerned with the welfare of my own kids. (Alex, p. 4).

When I was a teacher and didn't yet have my own kids I had certain expectations that were probably not realistic but looking back when I did have my own kids I thought 'jeeze.' In my own house I thought we were very structured and homework came first and still we struggled with certain aspects of our own children's education. I remember making certain judgement calls... how fair was I? It gave me a different perspective of what it [homework] can do to a family. (Charlie, p.1-2).

Reflexivity. In much research reflexivity plays a role and should be addressed or the very least acknowledged. Reflexivity has played a role in the initial interviews of this study; the following exchanges offer a glimpse at the role that reflexivity may have played. These examples may seem insignificant but do illustrate how a reflexive dynamic might exist; it appears that reflexivity manifested itself in one of three ways.

Reflexivity challenges may have emerged as a result of the researcher steering a conversation towards certain issues in the hopes that participants might offer their opinion. Situations where the original questions from an interview guide would not have yielded a certain answer. The following excerpt illustrates how this may have occurred.

During my lessons she would jump in and we'd team teach without me realizing we are team teaching. So that bothered me a bit. Compared to everyone else in the program I probably taught the least.

So when she was jumping in on your lessons, or making you feel weary about your style, do you think it was simply about individuals having conflict over teaching style or do you think it's more of a generalization about being a man and teaching?

No, I probably would agree with that (Sid, p.6).

Secondly, evidence of reflexivity existed within the conversations with four men who

offered reflective reactions or “ah-ha” moments regarding a certain topic being discussed.

Consider the following exchanges between researcher and participants.

You don't feel any added pressure or burdened or anything?

No not at all, but you know I never really thought about it until now. (Casey, p.2).

Do you think it was more about your performance?

I HOPE so! But you've just burst my bubble, otherwise they could buy a cardboard cut-out and there's a male. But honestly after your first year if you're not doing a good job it will come through on your assessment. (Charlie, p. 6).

Finally, the type of reflexivity which is often out of researchers hands, is perhaps a 'passive reflexivity' that always exists as a result of simply asking any question. Consider the fact that none of the participants offered their thoughts regarding hugging students without being asked. In asking about hugging, did it then become an issue for the participants?

Follow-up Conversation Findings

The notion of reflexivity is important to this study because the participants through their participation may have experienced a journey of 'coming to know'. Journeys where new knowledge may have had, or will have, a direct affect on the lives and teaching experience of the men who participated. Gauging reflexive influences was an important outcome of this study from the outset. The use of the follow up interviews was a direct attempt to understand the influence of reflexivity.

Three follow-up conversations were conducted. One conversation was held with two Grade Three teachers at the same time in the same room, where they responded to the same questions. A second follow-up conversation involved one preservice teacher. Excerpts from the follow-up conversations are tagged as 'Follow-up 1' and 'Follow-up 2' and the transcript page numbers are listed, this information is found in the parentheses at the end of each excerpt. The

goal of these interviews was to gauge the reaction of the participants upon being presented with some of the findings stated in the literature review. Doing so could explore how participation in this study may have affected the participants either on a personal or professional level. The presented findings outline the participants' reactions and in addition presents possible reflexive influences.

Direct questions from follow-up conversations. The participants were asked two direct questions related to their participation in this study: the first question explored reflexive influences within the entire study; the second explored reflexive influences based on the participants' participation in the follow-up conversation.

No participant agreed with the first question that asked if their participation in the study affected them either professionally or personally, yet their answers suggest that reflexive influence exists, consider these two responses:

I don't think how I taught in the classroom changed. I didn't look back on some of the questions you asked but I did find myself in certain situations thinking – we talked about that, Dave asked me about that but nothing really comes to mind that really affected my job. (Follow-up 1, p. 1).

No not really, when I reread the information you sent to us [interview transcript] it certainly brought a few things to my attention but nothing specific that I can recall. (Follow-up 1, p. 1).

My Neighbour

I've met my neighbour once.

He seems nice.

In casual conversation, I learned his girls go to my school.

He, in turn, learned I am a grade 1 teacher at their school.

We haven't really talked since.

Is it because... of coincidence with nothing more to it?
he thinks I'm some sort of creep?
of the party my step daughter threw?

With regards to part three of the follow up interview, two of the participants stated that they were not affected and likely wouldn't be affected by participating in the follow-up conversation. Neither participant offered any evidence that could lead to any interpretation that reflexive influence might exist. However one participant explicitly stated that his participation in the follow-up conversation may have affected him:

Some points yes, just about becoming more aware consciously of what I am doing. Like I said, I am comfortable of who I am and what I am doing; I'm comfortable teaching in the primary or elementary sector but there might be those who are not and I might be more aware of that now... (Follow-up 2, p. 9)

Analysis of participants' reactions to literature review excerpts. The figures below outline the reactions to the literature review excerpts that were presented in the follow-up conversations. Table 5 quantifies the reactions, Table 6 lists reflexive evidence, and Table 7 lists overall reactions or feelings of participants towards the excerpts. Participants' perspectives are presented also presented as excerpts. Only excerpts that represent congruence among the participants' responses to certain literature topics are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Participant Reactions to Presented Literature Review Excerpts.

Excerpt& brief summary:	Not worried	Agreed	Disagreed	Debated	Experience d	Observed
1: Male primary teachers need 'attending to'	0	0	2	3	1	1
2: Male teachers are victims of symbolic violence	1	0	0	1	0	0
3: Male teachers have an Overall positive experience	0	3	0	1	3	0
4: Men usually leave primary teaching.	2	0	1	1	0	0

(continued)

Table 5 Continued

Excerpt& brief summary:	Not worried	Agreed	Disagreed	Debated	Experienced	Observed
5: Primary schools are masculine by design.	0	0	1	3	0	0
6: Men distance themselves from female spaces to refuel their masculinity.	1	1	0	2	2	0
7: Male primary teachers are viewed as strange, odd, very feminine, or gay.	1	1	2	1	0	0
8: Male teachers are bothered by the fact they are viewed as role models.	0	0	3	3	0	0
9: Male teachers are often assigned difficult children.	0	1	0	1	1	0
10: Male 'tasking' exists within schools.	0	1	0	0	2	0
11: Men were not seeking teaching positions within primary schools.	1	0	2	1	0	1
12: Female teachers believe men are in primary schools to fill a token male role.	1	2	1	2	1	0
13: Men are formal and calculated in the way they demonstrate care.	0	2	1	2	2	0
14: Gender has little or no impact on boys achievement.	0	0	1	3	0	0
15: Role modelling is a daunting task for men.	0	0	2	1	0	0
16: Men take deliberate steps to re-establish their masculinities within feminized workspaces.	0	0	2	1	1	0
Total	7	10	19	26	13	2

Note. Reactions and number of reactions are listed.

The first set of excerpts relates to the idea that most men find primary teaching a positive and rewarding experience and not uncomfortable or uncertain. All three participants agreed and all three experienced positive workplace experiences. This finding parallels related findings from the initial interviews; where men experience overall satisfaction as primary teachers.

I don't feel uncomfortable at all, I have friends in the junior high and senior level and they say that they can't imagine working at the primary level but I've had mostly positive experiences. (Follow-up 1, p. 2).

All three participants embraced role modelling and did not see the responsibility of role modelling as a daunting task, again these findings resonated with the findings from the initial interviews. Within the responses the participants debated the suggestion that role modelling is an issue for some male primary teachers. Consider the following:

Well, we're all role models for our students, and anyone who is annoyed by that shouldn't be teaching. (Follow-up 2, p. 6).

I'm proud and happy that I'm given this special opportunity to be a role model for kids. Being in the education system now for close to 10 years, I see how few males are out there, especially at these grade levels, and I feel it gives me a wonderful chance to provide something that students are not always getting. They get their female facilitator as an educator more often than a male and I feel we have a lot to offer and it's something students should be exposed to. (Follow-up 1, p. 6).

People tell me I will connect with this type of student or that type of student but it doesn't make me feel I have to change who I am. I'm going to be myself day in and day out. I'm trying to model a good person. I'm responsible, successful, honest, and I want to model what I feel is right and who I am (Follow-up 1, p. 11).

All three participants debated or questioned the idea that the gender of a teacher has little or no impact on boys' achievement:

I think it all depends on the student. In the interview we discussed father figures and if there's a situation where the boy's male teacher is his only positive male influence then definitely there's an example for achievement. But when I think back I don't think I was any better or worse off when I had my male teachers. (Follow-up 1, p. 10).

When I think back to my experiences in school I think I excelled more in the classes where I had a male teacher and if someone was to ask me who my favourite teachers are: the three that come to mind are all male. I don't know why that is. Maybe because they were males, they kept my interest more, I don't know. Thinking back to those favourite teachers we had those conversations about hockey and soccer and I wonder if that contributed to my success or why they were my favourites. (Follow-up 1, p. 10).

I don't know too much about it. I'm assuming it does. I try to make sure all my students achieve well and maybe boys react better to boys, I'm not sure about the research in that area but I don't know. My opinion would be that students would react to different teaching styles therefore I would say yes and no. (Follow-up 2, p. 8).

Another topic that was debated by all three participants (and myself) is the notion that male primary teachers need 'attending to' or need to be looked after by female teachers:

What if?

What if I could truly run my room like I truly want?

What if I could shake up this ship and still meet up with them in the end?

What if I didn't have to fit this mold?

What if I could teach as if I were to learn?

Why do I expect me to be them?

My point is that every teacher needs to be looked after, but when it comes to that research I don't agree with it because if a male is in a primary setting they know they're there for a reason. Maybe some males are there because that's the only job they could get. I think it depends on the individuals. It's a biased, stereotypical statement to assume that all men need help. For me I don't think I need help or supervision. (Follow-up 2, p. 1).

No, but there is another male teacher who I work with who... well I believe the ladies who work with him in kindergarten feel that way, they do sometimes look after him. Maybe because he's new to the province, new to school...but they are doing that. They might be just looking out for the new teacher who is new to the province, new to the school. (Follow-up 1, p. 2).

In my experiences at our school, I don't see that male teachers are looked at any differently. I don't see that happening. (Follow-up 1, p.2).

Table 6

Participant Reactions to Literature Review Excerpts Where Reflexive Notions May Exist.

Excerpt & brief summary:	“I thought about that”	“I need to think about that”	“Never thought about that”	“Makes you think”	Experience reflexivity related to excerpt topic	Predictable reflexivity based on reaction
1: Male primary teachers need ‘attending to’						
2: Male teachers are victims of symbolic violence						
3: Male teachers have an Overall positive experience						
4: Men usually leave primary teaching.	1					
5: Primary schools are masculine by design.			1			
6: Men distance themselves from female spaces to refuel their masculinity.						
7: Male primary teachers are viewed as strange, odd, very feminine, or gay.						
8: Male teachers are bothered by the fact they are viewed as role models.						
9: Male teachers are often assigned difficult children.						
10: Male ‘tasking’ exists within schools.					1	
11: Men were not seeking teaching positions within primary schools.						
12: Female teachers believe men are in primary schools to fill a token male role.						1
13: Men are formal and calculated in the way they demonstrate care.						
14: Gender has little or no impact on boys achievement.						
15: Role modelling is a daunting task for men.						
16: Men take deliberate steps to re-establish their masculinities within feminized workspaces.				1	1	
Total	1	0	1	1	2	1

Note. Reflexive evidence occurrences are presented (empty cells = no occurrences).

My Classroom

In my classroom I am always the only adult.

I rarely have EA's or admin.

I forget the last time I had constructive feedback.

I don't remember the last time I've been evaluated... in another school maybe?

Perhaps I should check my file.

These reflective responses (listed in Table 6) suggest the participants were pondering a topic or issue that was presented to them and it might be something they could continue to think about as they move forward as a teacher. Consider the following excerpt related to the notion that Western schools systems are masculine by design:

I don't know I've never thought about that. I'd like to think that everyone should try to do the best. Masculine systems? I don't know – I think I might need to think about that. (Follow-up 2, p. 3).

Also consider this response when the participant was presented with research about men needing to 'refuel their masculinities' when working in settings where women largely outnumber men.

Sometimes at lunch I would go play basketball in the gym, to get away from some conversations, but that's just something I like to do. It's not because they were females but just because I wasn't interested in the conversation.

In light of this slide [quote on a slide presented in follow-up conversation], do you think you might have played basketball for a different reason?

No I was just not interested in the conversation.... But maybe subconsciously I did and didn't even know I was doing it. Maybe I went to the gym because I needed a male activity. (Follow-up 2, p. 9).

Finally, one participant shared the following in response to the fact that some research suggests men who teach at the primary level often get shifted to the highest grade within schools.

This response provides direct evidence of reflexive influences.

Before this study no, but after this study I might think that 'Oh other people actually think that' (Follow-up 2, p. 6).

Table 7

Participants' Overall Reactions to Presented Literature Review Excerpts.

Excerpt & brief summary:	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Surprise
1: Male primary teachers need 'attending to'			3	
2: Male teachers are victims of symbolic violence			2	1
3: Male teachers have an Overall positive experience		1	2	
4: Men usually leave primary teaching.			3	
5: Primary schools are masculine by design.			3	
6: Men distance themselves from female spaces to refuel their masculinity.			3	
7: Male primary teachers are viewed as strange, odd, very feminine, or gay.	1		2	
8: Male teachers are bothered by the fact they are viewed as role models.		1	1	1
9: Male teachers are often assigned difficult children.			2	
10: Male 'tasking' exists within schools.			2	1
11: Men were not seeking teaching positions within primary schools.			3	
12: Female teachers believe men are in primary schools to fill a token male role.		1	2	
13: Men are formal and calculated in the way they demonstrate care.			3	
14: Gender has little or no impact on boys achievement.			3	
15: Role modelling is a daunting task for men.			3	
16: Men take deliberate steps to re-establish their masculinities within feminized workspaces.			2	1
Total	1	3	37	4

Note. Overall reaction count is listed.

Overall, the participants reacted neutrally to the topics presented in the follow-up

conversations. Three topics resonated positively with the participants; one topic conjured up overall negative reactions, and four items surprised the participants. Consider the following three different perspectives:

I feel that that it's foolish. I don't take much stock in anything that I'm reading there. Maybe if an acquaintance were to ask me what grade level I am at, they might think that it's odd, they would suspect that I'm at high school or junior high. But as for the rest of that...I don't find it offensive, I just find it foolish. None of that is anything I've ever encountered. (Follow-up 1, p. 6).

Positive experience absolutely, I really enjoy where I'm at. I've been bumped around many grade levels and now that I'm in grade 3 I'm calling it home. I feel I have a lot of support and I feel I have developed a great relationship not only with co-workers but also with students and their parents and guardians and I don't feel uncomfortable or uncertain in any way. (Follow-up 1, p. 3).

For men, the resulting difficulties often amounts to situations where they are left ignored, deprived of knowledge, and without mentoring...
Working with my team of teachers... That really surprises me. (Follow-up 1, p. 2).

Poetry

As a way to include my own experiences as a primary teacher, I have included my own thoughts in the form of poetry. Many of the poems were presented above. Others stand on their own and do not easily mesh with the experiences of other participants. This suggests an emerging theme: nothing about this research clear cut; there exists many tensions and conflicting views. The participants' experiences, and my own, do not conveniently fit into clearly defined boxes. Many of the experiences witnessed by this study are somewhat conflicted or contradictory in nature and provide evidence of a series of tensions within the data. The ever-evolving concepts that emerged from the analysis of the transcripts and poetry certainly should have suggested this would be so. These tangled messages will play a prominent role in the discussion of these findings. The fact that I couldn't 'fit' some of my poetry into places and align them all with the

experiences of the participants is yet another example of the complexities of the issues within this study.

All of the poems, included those above can be found in Appendix R and appear as figures. The figures contain individual poems and displays how each poem is coded. The fact that some of the poems are 'caged' within an appendix and are not 'let loose' within the body of this document does not discount their significance. These poems are true representations of an experience and because they are not prominently on display should not discount their value. The same holds true for the participants' narratives – not all of them appear in print in this chapter but they do still contribute to the data, as does my poetry.

Table 8 summarizes the overall coding for the poems. It suggests that reflexive influences inspire much of the poetry and that other factors informed the poetry to a lesser degree. The influences are listed in order from high occurrences to low occurrences. The poetry collectively addresses a range of issues from reflexivity (10 occurrences) to experiencing stereotypes (4 occurrences), to the suggestion that becoming a father enhanced my teaching (1 occurrence).

Using the poems to make specific connections between my own experiences and the experiences of the participants is difficult. The poems are snapshots of only some of my experiences and therefore I cannot, through the poetry analysis or through the quantification of the poetry, show for example, that my overall experience as a primary teacher is a positive one. The fact that I only wrote about one positive experience should not imply that I've only had one positive experience teaching at the primary level. I would have to say the opposite is true; that my positive experiences heavily outweigh the negative. The poetry does however show, and as I have presented throughout the findings, that I have had some similar experiences to those of the

participants. Throughout the interviews the participants communicated experiences that resonated with many of the factors listed in Table 8 but as I have mentioned, not all of them are presented in the body of this text.

Table 8.

Quantification of Codes/Concepts Used in Poetry Analysis: Code and Occurrence

Code	Occurrences
Reflexivity experienced, due heightened awareness of issues because of research in this field.	10
Challenges likely to be experienced by primary teachers only.	4
Stereotyping that was experienced.	4
Attending to that was experienced or perceived.	3
Reinforced stereotypes through action or content of poetry.	3
Experienced professional relationships that were conflicted.	2
Belief that job performance should trump gender.	2
Examples of demonstrating care.	2
Communicated troubling notions related to demonstrating care.	2
Isolated in social settings and felt other male teachers would be beneficial.	2
Content of poem suggests parents welcome male primary teachers.	1
Experienced supportive professional relationships.	1
Welcomed the responsibility of role modelling.	1
Felt fatherhood enhanced teaching.	1
Cited challenges related to role modelling.	1
Described demonstrating care through relationship building.	1
Experienced challenges that all primary teachers could experience.	1
Provided examples of male ‘tasking’ within primary schools.	1
Communicated a positive attitude towards male ‘tasking.’	1
Experience discomfort in workplace.	1

Note. See initial interview codes for code definitions – Appendix O.

Unifying the Findings: More than Meets the Eye

As this study drew to a conclusion and after much reflection, a curious undercurrent appeared. As I have disclosed, by coming to know the complexities of being a male primary school teacher, I personally experienced a personal change where I came to recognize nuances in

my professional life which represented the realities of the male primary teaching experience. The stereotypes, the challenges, the opportunities, the expectations, etc, all existed before I came to know about them, the realities of being a male primary teacher were present but not recognized. Naturally I wondered if the participants were aware of the realities that surrounded their experience too. I wondered how such an awareness affected, or does not affect, their professional and personal lives.

As a response to these questions, I returned to the reflexive indicators that were built into this study. I reconsidered the data from the initial interviews and the follow-up conversations. Two conversations during the initial interviews illustrated that the participants may not have been aware of the tensions that enveloped them. Two participants, Casey and Charlie, both suggested that they were unaware of the issues before them. Casey, in discussing the expectations related to role-modelling, said: “I never really thought about it until now.” Similarly, Charlie exclaimed: “you’ve, just burst my bubble,” suggesting he had not considered that his hiring might have been based on anything other than merits. The follow-up conversation data also illustrates how the participants may not have been aware of the issues that surround them and their work.

Consider the participants' responses to the literature excerpts. When we look closely at the data, we see that the participants agreed with, or experienced the topics as presented to them during the follow-up conversations, only 23 times. Alternatively the same participants disagreed or debated the findings from previous studies 45 times. It is possible that their limited awareness setup situations where presented findings were new and unfamiliar to them and therefore created disagreement and/or debate. Also consider the reactions of the participants to some of the presented literature: on four occasions they reacted with surprise compared to the three 'positive'

reactions and one 'negative' reaction. Do the 37 'neutral' reactions suggest agreement or do they suggest that the participants were processing new information and did not have time to react positively or negatively? Perhaps they were unsure of how to react.

All of this, when blended with own personal standpoint, where I came to recognize the issues only by coming to know them, suggests to me that there is 'more than meets the eye'. It is possible that our male primary school teachers are not completely aware of complexities within their work-life experience.

Summary

The findings describe lived experiences shared by those participating men who teach at the primary level in Prince Edward Island. These findings represent the overall work experience of these men and in some cases also represent the blending of personal and professional experiences. The findings were organized using the following general topics: (a) overall work place experience; (b) becoming primary teachers; (c) demonstrating care; (d) socializing within the workplace; (e) challenges and opportunities before male teachers; (f) role modelling; (g) stereotyping; (h) fatherhood and; (i) reflexivity. The initial interview findings were presented first and contribute more heavily to the conclusions of the study. The follow-up conversation findings and the findings related to the poetry added an extra layer to the study and are primarily used to inform the discussion pertaining to the initial interview findings. The following paragraphs present a summary of the findings, highlighting major themes from the initial interviews, follow-up conversations, and the poetry.

With regards to the findings related to the overall workplace experiences, the majority of men had positive and professional relationships with their colleagues. Nine men also described

their workplace experiences as positive and comfortable. These findings resonated with the findings from the follow-up conversations. Four men shared stories where on occasion their workplace experiences were uncomfortable. It should be noted that these not-so-comfortable experiences were not necessary all linked to gender but could in-fact be experienced by all teachers regardless of gender. Overall, despite one's positive or negative experience, many participants expressed that more male primary teachers are needed and important.

With regards to the social side of working in primary schools, many of the men discussed the importance of socializing with their colleagues. Some participants built socializing into their daily routines, but for many men the daily grind of teaching in primary schools hindered their ability to socialize with their peers. In three instances participants also described situations where they felt the need to avoid socializing with colleagues.

Becoming a primary teacher was a positive experience for most of the men who participated in this study. All but two participants described how they received support regarding their decision to enter teaching. The majority of support originated from close friends and family. Despite the fact that these men experienced mostly support, some of the same men did experience discouragement, most of which was subtle discouragement; however explicit discouragement was experienced by two of the participants.

For the majority of the men interviewed, primary teaching was not their first career choice, in many cases these men described how their decision to enter primary teaching was made during transitional phases in their lives, such as the years following high school, during post-secondary study, or during the years that immediately followed their post-secondary study. Only two men described how at a young age they wished to be teachers.

Twelve participants described ongoing relationship building as a way to demonstrate care for their students. No teachers voluntarily suggested that they used hugging as means to demonstrate care for students. Although many participants were comfortable hugging students, some participants discussed concern over hugging students.

Some men explained that they experienced challenges that were due to the fact that they are men teaching at the primary level, challenges that might not affect women teachers, such as challenges associated with feelings of isolation in working within settings where women heavily outnumber the men. Although some men did experience challenges, many also recognized opportunities before, such as being favoured for employment in situations where school principals may have hired to simply 'get' a man onto their primary staff. Despite this, most participants communicated that promotion and hiring should depend on teachers' merits rather than gender.

Notions of role modelling was identified as a challenge for many men in previous studies but ten participants explained that they did not see role modelling as a challenge and instead welcomed the idea of being a role model. Four participants did describe concerns associated with assuming a male role modelling responsibility.

The very nature of the discussion related to men who teach at the primary level is often laden with stereotyping. This study has demonstrated a variety of stereotypes, both the stereotyping of men by other people but it also demonstrates that the participants themselves exhibited and reinforced stereotypes.

Other findings derived from the initial interview, suggested that fatherhood did change the way participants approached teaching, either by informing the participants about how they care

for young children or by shifting the participants' priority for the 'kids in their lives' from students to their own children.

Additional findings pertained to gender specified tasks within schools and suggested most participants were not bothered by gendered tasking.

Appendix S lists the overall findings from the initial interviews and corresponding poetry and assigns a value (percentage of participants) to each statement so that they can be ranked for significance and/or congruence.

The follow-up conversations offered a glimpse at the participants' reactions to related studies. The participants often debated findings. Those topics that were debated by all three participants include the notion that male primary teachers need 'attending to,' also debated was the influence that male teachers have on boys' achievement and socialization. Overall, the participants reacted neutrally to most of the topics presented in the follow-up conversation. The follow-up conversation findings also suggested that reflexive influences do exist within this study.

My own poetry was used as a means to include my experiences as a primary teacher. The poetry collectively addresses a range of issues but researcher reflexivity appears to have greatly influenced my experience. Other themes that appear most often in my poetry, those that represent my experience as a primary teacher and closely align with other participants, include: (a) challenges related to primary teaching in general; (b) experiences where I felt stereotyping existed; (c) experiences where I felt I was needlessly attended to; (d) situations where I reinforced stereotypes either through my actions or through the content of my poetry.

Finally, the findings of this study suggest that those men teaching at the primary level in

Prince Edward Island may not be completely aware of the tensions that exist within their work.

For example, men may consistently hear female teachers communicating the need for more men, yet these men may be unaware that the same women sometimes call into question men's abilities to work with younger students and thus 'attend to' these men or 'police' the actions of male primary teachers.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Tension

The study is near complete.
I feel as though I am done.
I want this document behind me.
As I sit and listen in Dalton 409 they seem disappointed.
They speak of missing tensions.

I hope the tension I am feeling is missed. I partly want to throw the tantrum
my two-year-old put on display earlier that morning. This is constructive
feedback I remind myself, and I feel myself relax – my face cooling.

As we chat their opening remarks still bounce bounce around the room.

Somewhere between joke, agreement, and suggestion...
I have my own reflexive 'ah ha' moment and things are clear now.
No longer am I screaming NO! Instead I am calmly whispering I can do this.
I can make this more... mine.

Yes I can embrace an opportunity and take this flat document and make it...
Worth my while.

I through reflection have accepted that there's more to it.
Yes there are things that need to be discussed here.
No I will not sweep it and those and these and them under a hidden rug.

The Lonely End of the Pink sought to understand and describe the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 levels in Prince Edward Island. The findings suggest much congruence with the experiences of the participants in this study and of those presented in previous studies. Despite these congruences between studies there also exist contradictory perspectives within studies. Consider Smedley and Perperell's (2000) study where they explored the tensions related to the complexities of care. Consider too, Roulston and Mills' (2000) study that explored how some men, despite making attempts to minimize gender stereotypes in their classrooms reinforced stereotypes. Also, Mullholland and Hansen (2003) described how family supported

men who enter primary teaching, yet their close friends did not. *The Lonely End of the Pink* is no exception, it contains many tensions - contrasts swirl between and among the themes explored by this research. Divisions exist between participants and contradiction even exists within the participants' own responses. Similarly, conflict exists within the many theories and themes that underpin this study. The very nature of this work, because the data were delivered by individuals who experience diverse standpoints, unearths, beckons, and even creates tensions.

Hard to Explain

I have a student teacher.
We often chat about her work - How does she improve as a teacher?
Within lulls, she asks about my work, about my research.

My response is always to the same – a bit scattered.
I don't know how to explain the work I am doing.
I get it, it's comfortably in my mind.
To teach is to learn but I can't seem to teach.
I can't seem to teach them about my work.
They want to know. They are curious.
I begin to explain and they don't get it.
'But' is what I always hear.

I'm sure if I was explaining it to another man I would find it easier.
I rarely get the chance.

I do see and feel a need to explain it though.
The longer I wait, the more I worry about the men in my shoes - those
who have participated. Those who may be wondering about what they've
learned.

But to the 50 odd ladies whom I've tried to explain this, I'm sorry.
I always wish I had said something differently.

As a researcher I cannot concretely draw conclusions; with this study I can simply report how it is so and suppose how it may be. Although the men 'say' one thing, they may also be 'saying' something else, thus creating a situation where ambiguities exist and are very much part of the discussion and are very much welcomed. It was not my intent to communicate vague

arguments but it appears that avoiding undefined conclusions is impossible because many tensions are presented within the data. The contradictions that surfaced as a result of my own participation in this study, also fuel the ambiguities within this study. It seems within this work much is evasive. As I draw conclusions, they are yanked away by a conflicting message as if trying to push two similarly charged poles together.

Even in making an effort to limit the divisions between researcher and participant, by including them in the lessons learned from previous studies, an inequality between researcher and participant still exists – it too is evasive. I have come to know the participants' experiences and they have come to know what the research tells us about men who teach in the primary grades, yet they are still deprived of an awareness that I now have. An awareness that in being a male primary teacher many tensions exist and affect us – some obvious and some concealed; many unbeknownst to many primary teachers. The awareness that many tensions swirl among us, may only come to be wholly recognized through guided reflection and by means of an omniscient perspective – this is a privilege the participants do not yet have. On some levels, the participants themselves are not aware that even their own interpretations of their own experiences may be obscured by 'unknown' tensions within their professional and personal lives.

As I have noted, I am afforded an omniscient perspective. This is not to say that I can present the following discussion in its entirety as an omniscient entity. Since I wear many hats: researcher, reporter, participant, teacher, and student, I cannot completely remove myself from the discussion. Throughout this discussion I am both a facilitator and a player, and as such, I am forced to present the discussion where my point of view becomes fluid. This fluidity calls on me to present a discussion where, as researcher, I use words like 'they' and 'men' throughout; but I

must also position myself within the discussion where I use words like 'we' and 'us'. This discussion that follows will slip from one point of view to another because I am constantly reporting about the men, and I am also always one of them. Just as the issues are pulled and tugged, I too, occupy divergent perspectives.

This research is laden with tensions. Yet despite a void of clear uncomplicated conclusions, it is also laden with practical lessons for our education community. Within the documented experiences of these men exist many lessons for primary teaching. The 'conclusions' and proposed recommendations that will be presented in this chapter were derived from the main research questions of this study:

1. What do men experience when teaching at the primary level in Prince Edward Island?
2. How are the experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island similar to those experiences reported in the literature review?
3. To what degree are men aware of the challenges and the opportunities before them?
4. How does an increased awareness of the challenges and opportunities before male primary teachers effect the interpretations of the participants' own experiences?

The last two research questions are closely linked to the aforementioned tensions because the participants' knowledge of the challenges and opportunities before them directly impacts not only their experiences, but also their interpretations of their experiences. The participants may experience something more than they recognized or were able to articulate.

As described in the methods chapter, a deductive-like research question was also posed. Did the participants, in the context of PEI's unique qualities, experience more hardship or opportunity as primary teachers? Despite the province's unique cultural position, it appears that

the experiences of men from Prince Edward Island are not more 'pronounced' or less 'fruitful'.

Curiously I find myself again in a vacuum, where sign and signifier elude me; in saying not more pronounced and not necessarily more fruitful have I answered a deductive-like question? Or because this study is fraught with divisions, is a deductive-like answer impossible? Perhaps the design simply prohibits this? In the interests of avoiding a philosophical quagmire I think it is important to acknowledge that there is no clear answer. Generating a deductive-like conclusion for the noted research question is premature and requires further research.

Context for Discussion

Before the findings of this study are discussed and lessons are communicated it is important to review three important ideas so that a context for the discussion can be created. First, I feel it is important to review the demographics related to male primary teaching in Prince Edward Island. Second, I feel it is important to clarify notions of gender binaries and outline what being male means in the context of this study. Third, I feel it is important that I declare my views on the roles of schools and how they should mirror the communities they serve. These three ideas will provide context for the discussion that follows.

Male primary teacher demographic. As presented in chapter one, there exists conflicting figures regarding the number of men who teach at the primary level. Regardless of which figure one accepts as most accurate (12% or 7%), what is obvious is that men are largely under represented at the primary levels in Prince Edward Island.

There exists varying schools of thought regarding the importance of male primary teachers. In this study some participants concurred that more men are needed at the primary level, yet research suggests that the gender of teachers has little or no impact on student achievement

(Connolly, 2004; Harnett & Lee, 2003; Skelton, 2001; and Roulston & Mills, 2000). Even so, there are less-tangible and more difficult-to-measure perspectives that suggest more men are needed at the primary level. It is within this view, that there exists difficult to prove benefits for learning when men are present in primary schools, that I propose that recruiting more men to primary teaching is important.

Men are from mars, males are from mars. Throughout this document I have interchangeably used the phrases 'men who teach at the primary level' and 'male primary teachers'. I acknowledge that there are those who would call into question the appropriateness of either sentence and thus I have made no distinction between the two. This study is about those who are identifiable as men or who view themselves as being male. I am not asking readers to adopt essentialist thought and place men or male teachers into a defined box. Nor am I asking readers set aside their own personal definition of male and adopt a definition or image of man or maleness. I am simply asking readers to acknowledge that within our society, exists a majority held view and recognized definition of who can be defined as: 'a male primary teacher' or 'a man who teaches at the primary level'. It seems contradictory to my efforts to ask readers to adopt this stereotypical view, but by doing so, I am provoking readers to step outside their own standpoint and into the standpoint that does affect the lives of many male primary teachers – a deliberate attempt to bring readers into 'our' experience. By asking readers to adopt a 'male' definition, I am forcing them to adopt the perspective that men are forced to navigate. In conducting my research and in interviewing men, there was no doubt that these individuals identified themselves as men but among them existed the complexness of individuality. The men who teach at this level and who were interviewed fall on a masculine spectrum, effeminate to hegemonic, but this study is

not about fragmenting minorities because there are too few male primary teachers to worry about 'what kind of male'.

Social learning theory, such as Vygotsky's 'internalization', suggests that we internalize and adopt social ways of being, (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006), thus through interacting with teachers children learn 'how' to be, however, in absence of many men this process may be irrelevant. This is an important argument that will be explored more deeply in coming sections of this chapter and obviously has implications for children who are in the process of forming identities.

Abstraction

We are in numeracy block.

The kids are excited to multiply and to divide.

They feel it's a new concept that the younger kids don't get to do. They feel special, unique... 'special' 'unique'

I am trying to show them that the manipulatives on their desk represent something, but not something tangible, rather they represent an idea...

Then it hits me, I'm not representative. I am an abstraction. I am misplaced, I do not clearly represent something real. Within these halls there is a disconnect.

It's only in the lobby that there exists a true representation.

That's where we find the dads, the couriers, the technicians, and the bus drivers.

Beyond the fire-doors and down the hall there is an abstract culture.

What Schools Should Be. Schools should be representations of culture (Foote, 2009), thus within schools we should find teaching forces reflective of the diversification of society where many groups of men are represented; but for now the first step is generating interest in primary teaching among all men, period. I am not suggesting that any man will do; the education system must be smart and strategic about the men we encourage to teach and who we recruit and hire. However, the education community should not stop there; we should continually strive for

all kinds of individuals of all orientations, races, and religions in schools. Schools devoid of minorities are, because communities are in a constant state of diversification, regressive.

Diversity presents itself in ways that vary across cultures, traditions, beliefs, gender, and identity, and should be celebrated for the opportunities created for personal and professional growth. Exposed to only one view, or too little diversity, we may become restricted in our imagination of possibilities for individuals and broader society. It is important in Canadian and international contexts to ensure that equity between genders is promoted, so that we do not limit developing views or opportunities in life for men, women, and those of alternative genders and identities (Parr & Gosse, p. 380. 2012).

Primary schools, where male teachers are at a minimum, have created a minority within school culture and hence the notion of societal representation becomes an abstraction with concrete ramifications.

Within the above context, a call for more male teachers at the primary level is a valid appeal. An appeal for more male primary teachers represents the foundation for the following discussion. Calling for more male teachers first requires communities to at least acknowledge the possibility that the low number of male teachers in our primary classrooms is a problem in our education system.

The driving force behind this discussion is to explore how the education system can responsibly address the shortage of male teachers at the primary level. However, let me be forthright about two things before proceeding; clarifying two concepts are vital. First, educating children is a community responsibility that includes parents, teachers, administrators, trustees, politicians, the media, and even our neighbours, therefore when I used the words 'education system' I am speaking to all education stakeholders, myself included. This group encompasses

anyone connected to the education system either directly or indirectly. Second, when I use the word 'responsibly' I would like to emphasize that arbitrarily throwing more men into schools is not a solution. As I have suggested, education must be more strategic in its efforts to recruit and retain more men – these recommendations of this study attempts to address this need.

Super Sub!

An old soccer buddy subbed for me today.
“Cool, another man!” they said.
“It’ll be a good day for your boys.” she said.
He bombed and couldn’t wait to get out.

Recommendations and Conclusions

Overall, the findings of this study largely reflect the themes similar to those presented in the literature review, highlighting many conflicting messages regarding the experiences of men who teach at the primary level. In acknowledging the uncertainty of these experiences, I therefore propose two overriding recommendations. First, the school system should initiate programs that educate the broader community about the experiences of men who teach at the primary grades and of the potential benefits of their work for student development. Second, the school system should provide collaborative opportunities for the group of men who teach at the primary level. These two recommendations are at the heart of the discussion of subsequent topics found in this chapter. As I have suggested, in my opinion the lack of male teachers at the primary level is a problem and in the interests of recruiting and retaining male primary teachers, these recommendations are necessary.

The aforementioned recommendations are symbiotic in that one cannot be successfully and wholly implemented without the other. Generally speaking however, the education component is a priority because without attempts to educate stakeholders the collaborative

initiatives would be implemented without the necessary understanding or awareness. This could result in limited empathy for those men who may be struggling with their roles as primary teachers. I propose a broad and wide-reaching initiative, where the findings of this study reach a variety of education stakeholders – stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with the lives of school children.

Collaborative opportunities do not need to be formalized, but male primary teachers should, at the very least, be made aware that they are not alone and other men in the province are sharing similar experiences. As groups are informed about the unique experiences of men who teach at the primary level, support and collaborative networks will naturally expand through understanding.

I would like to conclude this introduction to this chapter by emphasizing that I believe there is no 'plight' faced by male teachers here in Prince Edward Island. As I will explain, the experience of male primary teachers are mostly positive and rewarding; however that should not discount the fact that some men teaching at this level do have unique challenges. We should not dismiss the fact that some men don't always have positive experiences. Sure, women also have unique challenges and they may also have negative experiences but leaving the challenges experienced by men ignored is not helpful or healthful and therefore addressing them is needed. We should also recognize that among the men who teach at the primary level, exists complex experiences that call on us to accept and to reflect on them.

Context for the Recommendations and Conclusions

I have presented two broad recommendations above, the coming sections present discussions where context is built around each recommendation. Each section below links the

findings to reoccurring topics that have emerged throughout the study and in doing so the overriding recommendations take on a more specific quality.

The title of this study *The Lonely End of the Pink* implies that teaching in the primary grades is an isolating or lonely experience. Yet, as I will discuss, the overall experience of the men who teach at the primary level is a positive experience. I would concur that it is a positive experience but I would also suggest that, for some men there are times when it is lonely and complicated.

Isolating experiences. As described in the findings the men who participated in this study expressed varying views regarding the perception that primary teaching is an isolating experience. Five men said that their experiences were not at all isolating however, we must ask: what was experienced by the other eight participants? The remaining men, even though they did not indicate so, could very well have also had experiences free of isolating feelings but the opposite may also be true. It is possible that the majority of the men interviewed are in-fact having isolating experiences in working in the primary grades. Isolating experiences as a result of being part of a minority within their workforce. Therefore we must address the needs of minority groups within workplaces and assume that these isolating feelings exist and accept that, for some men, these feelings are problematic. Within the contrasting experiences: those isolating, those not, and those indeterminable - important lessons for male primary teachers can be found and therefore warrant closer examination.

Male teachers' experiences. Overall, the findings of this study do resonate with findings from previous studies that suggested most men have

“Very positive, it's a wonderful building. We laugh together and share our lives and that makes this place a better place to work.”

positive work experiences while teaching young children but they have communicated instances

“...but it can be uncomfortable when you’re that only one, like you’re the black sheep in the corner...”

where contradictory elements existed (Cushman, 2005; Jones, 2007). We again find conflicted messages about the experience of being a man and teaching in primary schools. Nine men did indicate that their experience was positive but five participants did not. Those five men did not specifically describe their experience as negative but we cannot also assume it was overwhelmingly positive. Therefore, similar to the discussion related to isolation, we are forced to make suppositions – we could assume the remaining experiences were positive but we could also assume the remaining experiences had negative determinants. What we can say for certain is that negative experiences do occur for some men. Four men described where specific negative experiences occurred, but to assume that their overall experiences were negative is premature. Once again we are presented with a factious dilemma, where we cannot make clear generalizations about the experiences of men who teach at the primary level but ignoring prospective negative experiences is not an option. These potentially negative experiences should be addressed through education and collaborative support.

Happy You're Back

Between the informal greetings and the daily reminders.
Between the grind of the pencil sharpener and the shrill of the class pet.
I catch something interesting.

“I’m glad he’s back,”

We’ve just completed a preservice placement in our room.
They loved her and I’m sure they’ll miss her.

“I’m glad to have Mr. Kerwin back.” said Dylan

Jake agreed...

“We probably won’t get another boy teacher for a while.”

Primary responsibilities. Changing perceptions about who is 'suited' for primary teachers is a responsibility that transcends male primary teachers themselves – an attitudinal shift that challenges deeply engrained accepted societal norms requires a much more comprehensive effort. How do we facilitate this shift? How do we convince others that men do belong in primary schools? How do we also communicate that not just any man will do? These two questions bring to the forefront stereotypes that need to be addressed. This shift requires both a systematic approach but a shift must also exist on a personal front. Each teacher must personally commit to making an effort to eliminate stereotypes, while not falling into and reinforcing the very stereotypes that make our work more difficult.

I have previously stated that more men are indeed needed, but I have also suggested that education also needs to be strategic. As such, I believe that it is essential that society does not concern itself with a collective obsession over 'whom' – as in not to worry about recruiting a right group of men. Rather we should focus on a specific 'what' – as in focusing on what individual men can do. Yes, who we need is more men, but more importantly what we need is men who will do three very important things. We need men who will: (a) challenge stereotypes by avoiding their own perpetration of symbolic violence ; (b) be themselves while showing students and colleagues that primary teaching is just as much a male domain as it is a female domain; and (c) effectively and enthusiastically educate young children. These three tasks constitute the 'personal shift' that is required to address the stereotypes that colour primary teaching as women's work. Yet, this personal shift must co-exist within systemic change.

Avoiding perpetrating symbolic violence. One of the three components of this 'personal shift' is the idea that all male teachers need to diligently avoid perpetrating our own versions

symbolic violence. As previously explained, symbolic violence, in the context of men teaching at the primary level, involves situations where individuals are deprived of knowledge. We cannot deprive those around us of the knowledge that our experiences are at times different from the majority. An important step towards avoiding self-perpetrated symbolic violence begins when we stop pretending that all is well, when we resist the urge to smile and nod.

Afraid to Say

'So what have you learned?' many of my colleagues ask.

Suddenly I am caught.

Do I share the tricky stuff or do I sugar coat it.

I'm afraid to say because I don't want to offend them.

"Symbolic Violence? Come on! Really?" Is what they might say.

I keep that then to myself.

But... did I just commit symbolic violence myself?

Those men who have had negative experiences should courageously step forward and describe these experiences more openly. In saying this, I recognize the complication that I have presented. Is it a 'manly' thing to 'cry' out? In crying out, some researchers have suggested that doing so shows weakness or communicates a 'sissy-ness' (Cushman, 2005). Therefore, in crying out, perhaps a stereotype is reinforced; a stereotype that characterizes male primary teacher as very feminine (Jones, 2006) calling into question the masculinity of men (Carrington, 2002). I believe however, that the act of speaking out and proclaiming a negative experience as unjust in the context of our professional setting could instantly break down the stereotype that suggests male primary teachers are somehow weak. This act of 'defiance' is not weak, it is instead powerful and positions us not as subordinate-like, but rather as proactive and purposeful.

Can't Count

I can't count the number of times.
The number of times a female colleague says...
'You are needed'

I am torn,
Do I smile and agree? Or...
do I catch them off guard and ask why?

I wonder what answer they might offer.

I know I should.
I know it's a natural starting point.
A point where this conversation can unfold.
A conversation that is needed.
Not to stir the pot but rather a chance to ask:

What do you really expect of me?

Through the act of speaking out a domino effect takes hold – by speaking we educate, through education we make those around us aware that some experiences are negative. The more aware everyone is of the possible uncomfortable situations that men encounter while working at this level, the more likely the negative situations can be addressed. Communicating these encounters should not be done to discourage men from entering primary and should not be done to shame those who may be responsible for creating those negative experiences. These experiences should be presented to educate and to empower. Doing so will demonstrate to other men that there exists a solidarity-like support network, albeit unorganized and perhaps unrecognized. Doing so will educate female colleagues, also empowering them to embrace a shift away from stereotyping about men who teach at the primary level and about primary teaching in general.

If the learning community wishes men to willingly and voluntarily pursue primary teaching, then society as a whole cannot continue to send discouraging messages about men who

teach at the primary level. Throughout the narratives shared by the participants, we can see many subtle discouraging messages and, although rare, we see implicit discouraging messages too. It's not enough to feel supported by friends and family; society and schools need to eliminate the subtle and implicit messages that communicate to us all that primary teaching is a 'sacred' female domain (Parr, Gosse, & Allison, 2008; Harnett & Lee, 2003). The colleagues of the participants who communicated discouraging messages, either implicitly or explicitly, need to be educated about the impacts of their messages. They also need to be educated about the real benefits of young children being exposed to not only a multitude of helpful feminine perspectives but also a multitude of positive and helpful masculine orientations. In these respects, discouraging men from teaching at the primary grades is counter-intuitive to the goals of education.

Presentations

I've had the pleasure and the pain of presenting at 'the convention'.
Pleasure, because it truly was a pleasure.
Pain because it was frightful.
Nevertheless, I came through it unscathed, yet wishing...
not to have to do it again anytime soon.

Yet in my revisions...
I call on the PEITF to embrace this work and bring it to others' attention.
Again I feel sick and worry...
If they call on me, what would others think?

We need to address those unhelpful messages communicated in this study's findings. We need to address the messages that sometimes do much harm to male primary teachers. This is something that I think the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation should consider in upcoming conventions. The messages presented in this thesis and by other researchers need to be communicated to teachers *en-masse*, simply doing so in a grade-level-like workshop or to a committee is not enough. If change is desired then real action that facilitates the beginnings of

widespread change is required.

Honestly demonstrating that primary teaching is also a male domain. Celebrating and promoting the fact the most men find primary teaching a rewarding and positive experience is important. I believe that we – male primary teachers – must embrace this responsibility in our daily teaching lives and demonstrate our pride in the work we do. We must demonstrate to our female colleagues, the parents we work with, the preservice teachers we mentor, the administrators we report to, and demonstrate to the general public that what we do is inherently rewarding and important. If we truly desire more men in the primary sector then this message needs to be communicated clearly. We need to break down stereotypes that convey primary teaching as a ‘female domain’ and this responsibility begins with the men who teach our youngest students. This message must, most importantly, be clearly communicated to the students we teach.

Our students need to see us happy and effective. Male teachers need to take those important steps that communicate to students that school and doing well in school is a meaningful and worthwhile pursuit (Kauffman, 2011; Carrington, Tymms, & Merrell, 2003). Demonstrating our love and enjoyment for what we do will provide the foundation that communicates to students that primary teaching is something they might consider as a career.

Some may argue that sending this message to young children is futile, but even at this young age, children are beginning to establish gender norms and roles (Hutchings et. al., 2008; Carrington, Francis, Skelton, Read, & Hall, 2008; DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997 as cited in Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008; Farquhar, 1997). Case in point, some participants in *The Lonely End of the Pink* communicated that even at an early age, they knew that they wanted to teach. Many of the

participants communicated that early life influences informed their decisions to enter primary teaching. Therefore we can assume, as other researchers have concluded, that students who see men in school will begin to equate primary teaching as a possible male pursuit (Connolly, 2004).

It is also important that the education community begins to question why the participants in this study mostly viewed primary teaching as a secondary career choice. Society must ask why men are not choosing to enter primary teaching outright.

Mountain Biking on Rugged Trail

I remember it clearly.

13 years ago me and a teaching buddy sweating it out on the hills of Bonshaw.
Skinned knee caps, bruised collar bone, and bloodied knuckles.

Between trails I tell him that I am planning to join teaching.

He was happy, he was teaching at the time and though it suited me too.
His first words: "You could join me and coach high school!"

Funny, primary hadn't entered his mind.
He was later surprised by the stream I chose.

He still hints I should transfer to senior high... I am always tempted.

Those aspiring to become teachers in general, should be identified early and asked to consider primary teaching, or more importantly asked why they are not considering primary teaching - important lessons lie within. The influencing factors that communicate to society that men should avoid primary teaching are the stereotypes that most need to be addressed. These stereotypes are most difficult to tackle because they are deeply and broadly ingrained within cultures – both at the societal level and at the school level. Culturally anchored or embedded stereotypes largely exist outside any individual's influence and as such, attitudinal change requires a long-term systemic solution and a personal effort. It is only through gradual increased

participation in primary teaching by men and by systemic and cultural education that we can change the view that men do not belong. Again, we are presented with a catch-22 of sorts; we need more men to help break down the barriers, but the very barriers, that need toppling prevent men from entering primary teaching. Therefore where does one begin?

Those responsible for recruiting and training teachers have an opportunity and a responsibility to 'catch' and convince men to become primary teachers within the transitional phases described in the findings chapter. Such action also needs to be implemented even before transitional life phases, ideally during high school. This presents an enormous challenge for recruiters and trainers.

The high school staff make-up is much more representative of society; there appears to be a gendered-staff-balance, as there should be, but this balance also presents a problem. In being the teaching-stream where most male teachers congregate, high school atmospheres suggest to the young aspiring teachers that high school is the place for male teachers. Smedley (2007) discussed how some men, upon entering primary teaching, exhibit bravado-like behaviours to reinforce their masculinities and Trim (2007) suggested "these acts are 'as much about self as audience'. Perhaps the high school atmosphere appeals to those men who have a need to exhibit bravado-like behaviours. High school might be appealing to men because of the competitive elements found in high schools, such as coaching or the competition for post-secondary admission. Also, those who have had positive high school experiences may likely be drawn to the high school teaching experience. Those positive high school experiences are fresh in graduate's minds and the thought of teaching at the high school level is likely appealing. Those who have not had positive experiences in high school may equate high school teaching with all teaching –

turning potential preservice candidates against teaching all together. There will always be those who enter teaching because they had poor experiences in school and are driven to change the system but I would presume that most of our students do have mostly positive experiences in high school.

As high schools evolve and continue to embrace cooperative education and form links to trades and professions, would it not be prudent to link high school students with primary teachers? A first step would be to convince high school teachers and staff that primary teaching is a viable career opportunity for men, so that the idea of cooperatively linking service learning to primary teaching is at least considered.

Those potential teachers who do commit to teacher training should at least consider primary teaching, or be presented with the option to work

“I got into the education program at Acadia and was in the K-6 program and did some practicums in Grade 1-2-3 and really enjoyed it so that kind of opened my eyes...”

with young children at some point during their training. UPEI does this with an alternative preservice placement option but it is very much a student choice. Perhaps this endeavour should not exist as a passive option for preservice teachers; perhaps it should be embedded within their education where they are required to at least experience a primary classroom. This however is a heavy-handed approach and in an ideal world would not be necessary. Eliminating the need to actively recruit male teachers to the primary grades is the ultimate goal.

Working With and Within Tensions

As I have suggested, this study highlights ever-present and evolving tensions within the experiences of men who teach at the primary grades. In reflecting on the findings, I am struck by one major observation – the documented experiences seem too clean, as if there is a real

reluctance to communicate 'soiled' experiences. A couple participants were very forthcoming about negative experiences but this was rare. Perhaps, as I have previously described, there is a limited awareness of the issues afflicting men even among the male primary teachers themselves. The experiences described by the participants are ultimately positive with little to suggest otherwise. Ideas such as the responsibility of being role-models seems largely welcomed, but I'm not completely convinced that is true.

“no discouragement from friends and family but I felt more glaring eyes within the schools in the system, like; Oh it's a male in the primary, how's he going to make out? Is he here just because it's an open position?”

Striking Contrast

My career has taken twists and turns. I see it as having unfolded in three phases:

My pre-primary

Grade 1

Grade 3

The first phase led me to primary teaching and is another story.

In Grade 1 I experienced the discomforts of being a man in a primary classroom.

Grade 3 is emerging as an awakening.

It is here that I feel comfortable. It is here where I feel... accepted.

In Grade 1 things were different.

It was not comfortable.

Although welcomed, I did not feel welcomed.

I felt always as if an outsider looking in.

It was then that I did my literature review.

I don't know if what I felt was imagined or experienced but...

I am happier away.

Today I am wiser. Today I enjoy my days. Today I laugh more.

Today I am more comfortable teaching as I wish to do.

Today I don't feel as though eyes are on me...

as though I need to fit a predefined Mrs. Grade 1.

I do not wish to overstep the data that I have gathered but I suspect there is perhaps more to the story than appears. I have made much about reflexivity and I have communicated how through reflexivity my own teaching experience was certainly affected. I have experienced a

journey of coming to know, that which is not completely comfortable.

In having the privilege of viewing the findings and having had the opportunity to reflect on them through a lens that is different from that of the participants, I propose that the overall experience of these men may be altogether positive because of some of the things they are *not* aware of. It is conceivable that some participants may be experiencing their daily lives, unaware of the tensions and stereotyping that swirls among them.

I am not suggesting the participants are oblivious to injustices around them and that injustices are rampant; nor am I suggesting that new knowledge could lead to such adverse conditions that the male primary teacher experience would become overwhelmingly negative. I am suggesting however, that this very topic is largely under-researched and the issues at this topic's core may simply be unknown by many. It stands to reason that the participants themselves would not necessarily recognize some of the challenges before them. I only need to look to my own experience for proof of this. I was plodding along happily until I began to learn. Again I feel I must reintegrate my experience as a primary teacher is certainly a positive one, but it has not been one without discomfort.

To all the ladies in the house. This research has not considered the perspective of the women with whom we work. As a researcher, I can only assume their thoughts and can only interpret the actions which I have observed through my own practice. I can only interpret the role they have played through the narratives shared by the participants. The men here have shared stories that suggest very positive working relationships yet it appears that some women they work with have contributed to the tensions in this work. Most participants have communicated great appreciation for the women they work with yet, even among those participants, some have

suggested troubling exchanges with their female colleagues.

Too Kind?

“You've been too kind to the women.”

Too kind to the women?

I have no problem with the women!

I know they play a role here too.

For me their role has been more than supportive.

Yes, there are times where they have stumbled.

Sure, they are not completely innocent but,

I don't blame them...

Maybe they just don't know.

Maybe they are just not sure how to approach us anomalies.

Like the men, the women lack an awareness of the issues before male primary teachers. I'm sure many women are not aware that their actions or words may create uncomfortable situations for men. I don't think the women we work with need to walk on egg shells or handle their interactions with us with kid-gloves, but I do think our female colleagues need to become aware of the stereotyping that exists within school culture. Like the men, they must accept a share of the responsibility for contributing to and maintaining stereotypes. These stereotypes exist and are communicated through the expectations that women have of the men they work with. This includes assumptions about: the kinds of work men do in schools; the ways in which men can demonstrate caring; the expectations about the roles men should assume and; the expectations about how men should carry themselves and operate within their classrooms.

Role modelling and care for students. I have suggested that men, in addressing stereotypes within their control, should simply be themselves. Being oneself is the easiest form of role modelling. As one participant explained: “we cannot fake it, they always know”and therefore

we must be ourselves. Teaching is very much about modelling, we teach, whether we are conscious of it or not, through the unintentional non-verbal messages we portray and by the words we use - we teach by being, this cannot be avoided. Ashley's (2003) suggestion that teachers as role models *per se* have a limited effect boys is too oversimplified. The fact that 'limited' is a descriptor in Ashley's work suggests that there is at least some influence and therefore, more men should be teaching at the primary level. By welcoming more men, we will be embracing a more accurate model of and for society. The men themselves will become a part of a modelled society and will be models for children. Granted, the concept of role modelling is not simple and there exists many complexities associated with role-modelling (Cushman, 2005) and many teachers are challenged by the notion of being a role model (Skelton, 2007). However Skelton (2009) described the participants in her study as not being confounded by role modelling but were mostly concerned with modelling what it means to be a good citizen or a good person for students. The majority of the participants in *The Lonely End of the Pink* largely communicated very little concern over role-modelling, many described how they modelled being a good person for their students.

We need not be irritated and annoyed by role-modelling expectations that call on us to portray an elusive and difficult to define persona of the responsible and successful man (Skelton, 2009; Smedley & Pepperell, 2000; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003). Rather than trying to portray ourselves as some sort of 'male role-model,' pigeonholing ourselves into a rigid and illusive role (Cushman, 2005), we should instead consistently be ourselves. We should demonstrate what it means to be a good and caring citizen while presenting our true character. Showing oneself and modeling a good person is perhaps a means to level the field, a way to circumvent gender specific

role-modeling. By featuring individuality without conforming to a cast, men in primary schools will nudge their workplaces toward a true diversified representation of society. If *en masse* our primary schools are presented as diversely as possible, where all minorities, races, religions, and orientations are represented through an equal number of men and women, then children will see a slice of a society we wish to become. The problem is then, what does education do in the meantime? Education must continue to do what must be done first and foremost, that is to care for the children in our classrooms.

Hybrid Hug?

I've written about hybrid hugging – the poem: *Side Tackle*.
Since then my son arrived.
I've learned what it means to hug.
I wish I had learned this earlier.
I no longer set up for a side tackle.
Sometimes they need a hug. It's OK dammit!

It's also OK to 'stick it to those' who feel otherwise for the wrong reasons.

Demonstrating care for one another is the cornerstone of good relationships, teachers who can model this do not need to worry about the role they are portraying. Although this argument seems simplistic, it is in essence at the core of good teaching – we should not lose sight of this fact. For some of the men in this study, this approach seemed popular. Many men described that they placed much emphasis on relationship building as a means to demonstrate care for students. This resonates with other studies (Cushman, 2010). If the participants truly practice what they have communicated about care and role-modeling in their classrooms, day in and day out, then the island students under the care of 'our' men are indeed in good hands.

“... I call this class a family and I work that way. Some days we're are upset with behaviours but we all still like each other. I never brush off a child or never raise my voice I don't believe in that. Very much about creating a mutual respect.”

Noise is Not Nurturing

In she Walks
It's a bit chaotic.
The activity free and flowing. LOUD.
Her body language disapproving.

A participant described how a colleague felt that noise was not nurturing.
Another described how men do things differently.
Theorist would refute both.
But what does *she* think?

Does she see me doing something that the rest of them would not.
In doing so am I somehow guilty?

Guilty of pushing the primary norms.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that some of us do not always do a good job of modeling the 'good person'. Through our practice, we do sometimes send negative messages to students and according to some researchers, despite our best efforts, we cannot escape gender-defined role-modeling (Skelton, 2002; Hutchings, 2005; Foster & Newman, 2005; Mills, Hasse, & Charlton's, 2008). Since we all fall somewhere on a masculine and/or feminine spectrum, we cannot escape how we broadcast 'ourselves' to our students. As such, like in so much of this research, we are presented with yet another additional layer of tensions. Be oneself but don't show the 'wrong' self! As such, it is vital that teachers continue to reflect on the way we carry ourselves. We need to continue to become aware of our own personal influences – influences that are active the moment we walk into a classroom. Teacher trainers need to make inservice and preservice teachers aware of the complexities of role-modeling and the associated complications caused by some masculinities (Connolly 2004) and some feminities (Luk-Fong, 2010).

Negative masculine influences that seep into the realm of role-modeling largely depends on an individual's ability to manage his or her specific masculine performance or profile. The

different masculine performances: hegemonic, subordinate, marginalized, and complicit (Connell, 1995 as cited in Roulston & Mills, 2000), all have varying degrees of influence on learners. What researchers have explained is that certain forms of masculinity exasperate messages that communicate school and doing well in school is not a worthwhile masculine endeavor (Connolly, 2004).

This happens when boys internalize and interpret 'manly' norms as norms that are in conflict with the virtues of doing well in school (Kauffman, 2011; Renolds as cited in Shelton, 2008; Connolly, 2004). Consider the toys we give to our toddlers; boys more often than not get trucks, diggers, and balls. The girls are given dresses, tiaras, and tea sets. This of course is blatant stereotyping, but it is a norm.

Luka's Toy Box

My son's toy box.

- Balls
- Scary animals
- Hockey sticks
- Trucks
- Diggers
- Puzzles of trucks and diggers
- Dinkies
- Spider-man

His crayons are in a drawer. Separate. Different.
What have I taught him in his first 24 months.

Very early, our children are bombarded by messages defining men and defining women. That boy who is given that figurine with the freakishly large and defined muscles who drives the dump truck and who moonlights as super hero is seldom presented in the context of school. These idolized abstractions are almost always portrayed as 'strong men,' rarely presented to children with books or anything associated with school.

This idea, that real men 'don't do school' germinates and then grows in school cultures where men are absent from primary school teaching forces. Children throughout primary school, and likely elementary school, continue to equate school as a woman's domain because women represent the only gender that students often encounter until junior high (DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997 as cited in Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008). As I have mentioned above, this process is intensified when certain masculinities exasperate the message that school is not for boys. When more men become primary teachers, then the message that primary schooling is not for boys dissipates and helpful masculinities may begin to outweigh the unhelpful masculinities (where they exist) – especially if employers are strategic. Teachers need to understand that if they cannot completely and effectively model a good citizen or what it means to be a good person then some negative aspects of masculinity and femininity can compound the shortcomings of their modelling (Skelton, 2007). We need to proactively counter those negative influences and this begins with professional development and personal reflection.

For those men who may be struggling, it is imperative that administrators not commit the symbolic violence described in the literature (Gosse, Parr, & Allison, 2008). As

“In my classroom I am always the only adult. The last time someone came in was... just to see how the projector was mounted. I don't remember the last time I've been evaluated.”

administrators are pushed to provide school-wide professional development opportunities, attending to the needs of one or two men on staff could be left ignored. Administrators need to be made aware of symbolic violence and they need to be made aware of the challenges experienced by men and women, so that when needs arise, the needs do not go unrecognized. Administrators need to provide male teachers with the necessary professional development that allows them to manage

the subtle negative role-modeling messages that they may be sending. Administrators need to help men and women alike, to effectively model the virtues of a good person. This added support could help keep existing men within our primary schools.

Cushman (2005) presented a variety of reasons that cause men to leave primary teaching, one of them being false sexual abuse allegations by students and/or parents as a result of misinterpretation of appropriate touching by men, such as touch through hugging. Michael Parr and Douglas Gosse (2012) cited this situation as a major challenge for men who teach at the primary level in Ontario. The lessons from Parr and Gosse's study should not be ignored, but those men who do experience anxiety about demonstrating care for students can take comfort from the lessons learned in *The Lonely End of the Pink*. The participants in this study, communicated an awareness of the challenges and dangers before men regarding demonstrating care through touch such as hugging. However, the participants also communicated how they were able to demonstrate effective caring for students without hugging. These men described ongoing care through long term relationship building and mutual respect, describing a standard of care to be proud of. As a parent, I would have no qualms about my son being hugged by a teacher but I am reassured by the fact that he can be effectively cared for in other ways.

Daily routines, socializing, and isolation. Of all the lessons learned from this study, one of the most tangible or practical lesson is connected to workload and how that directly relates to job satisfaction. *The Lonely End of the Pink* revealed that there is a link between workload and workplace isolation. As teachers become more pressed for time, they find themselves with less opportunity to socialize and to collaborate. This is important because of concerns related to men's feelings of isolation in the workplace and its correlation to job satisfaction (Mulholland &

Hansen, 2003).

As I have suggested, the men in *The Lonely End of the Pink* did not express deep concern over feelings of isolation, yet many of them communicated wishes that would suggest isolating feelings existed under the surface (another example of how there is a lack of awareness among men about the issues surrounding them).

Many men expressed a desire that more men should be hired to help fulfil a companionship need.

The described companions would serve mostly a friendship or 'keeping company' need. These

“I'd rather work in a place where there's a 50/50 split or where there is more men. I'd love to work with more men but in this area of the education world that is not a reality right now.”

relationships could certainly expand past a 'keeping company' role and could develop into a more professional collaborative role that could foster important discussion around the very issues highlighted in this study.

The participants expressed concern over the lack of opportunities to socialize with all colleagues, often due to the very nature of work within primary settings. As administrators begin to plan for upcoming school years, they should consider the lessons learned from this study and from previous workload studies on P.E.I. (MacDonald, Wiebe, Goslin, Doiron, & MacDonald, 2010). If at all possible, they should do what they can to alleviate unnecessary demands at the primary level so that more socializing and collaborative opportunities can be facilitated. If the nature of workload prohibits time for informal collaboration throughout the day, then more formal arrangements should be built into schedules. Many schools on Prince Edward Island are doing this and have presented effective models for collaborative work by building regularly scheduled professional learning meeting times into schedules. Researchers have suggested that

these formal arrangements are appreciated by men and are more in-line with men's normative experiences (Foster & Newman, 2005).

The participants of this study affirmed the importance of socializing with staff for both respite and for professional collaboration. Administrators who address this concern will have taken an important step towards a more collaborative workforce. Administrators who also hire the additional 'right kinds of men' (Jones, 2003), those who are highly qualified and skilled, will have taken important steps at increasing the job satisfaction of existing male teachers (Mulholland & Hansen, 2003). They will have also made an important contribution at retaining existing male teachers. Most importantly they will have made improvements to learning within primary schools.

Challenges and opportunities summarized. All stakeholders: male teachers, female colleagues, administrators, school board staff, teacher trainers, preservice teachers, government officials, parents, and students need to become aware of and come to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with primary teaching. The opportunities of which I speak, relate to professional opportunities, specifically regarding hiring and promotion. The challenges category is much broader and falls into one of three categories: (a) challenges related to teaching in general, that could include anything from workload to dealing with difficult student behaviour; (b) challenges that could be experienced by both men and women, however these such challenges are defined as 'challenges for men' because these challenges are considered from a male perspective – if the perspective is reversed then these challenges could be considered a female challenge, but because I am examining the male perspective they are not; (c) challenges encountered by men that are related to unfair treatment such as: symbolic violence, stereotyping,

and conflicted relationships with the women with whom they work. The last two categories are of particular interest to this study and should be proactively communicated to the education community.

Some of the challenges described by men that would likely only be experienced only by men are presented below. Parallel female challenges may be similar, but because of perspective, they are essentially different challenges. These

challenges include: (a) the challenge of gaining respect in this teaching atmosphere, where some women still hold onto the perception that men do not belong in primary schools and could not adequately

“Usually being the only male or one of two males in the room it is difficult to get listened to until you make your point and they're like ‘oh this guy knows what he is talking about, he's a primary teacher we've got to give him a little respect like he gives us.’”

educate our youngest students; (b) the challenge of supporting young female students who have been physically or sexual abused by their fathers; (c) challenges related to working within relationships that are defined and affected by gender specific stereotypes, including relationships with both colleagues and students; (d) challenges related to students who see men as a novelty within primary schools and who initially may take men seriously in their roles as primary teachers; (e) challenges related to isolation in working with so many women and a feeling of being 'tired' of working with so many women.

Other challenges, challenges that develop as a result of men being unfairly treated or through stereotyping include: (a) being symbolically victimized – a quiet passive under-the-surface violence where victims are alienated and/or demoralized. Such violence in the context of this study, existed in the form of implicit and/or subconscious policing of men at the primary level; (b) challenges where men explicitly experienced demoralizing comments, where they were

directly confronted about their presence in primary school teaching; (c) challenges related to role expectations within schools and within communities, where men are expected to remedy certain behaviours or are expected to assume gender specific roles in schools by virtue of their presence or being.

Collectively, the participants in this study have described all of the challenges and opportunities noted above but it's likely that some individual men may have held back in describing situations, or chose not to describe situations, where these challenges and/or opportunities existed. It is also possible that some men were simply unaware of some the challenges or opportunities before them (Mills, Hasse, & Charlton, 2008; Sumsion, 2000). Addressing those unique challenges, those experienced only by men is important for both retention and for general job satisfaction.

Many of the challenges these men encounter may go unnoticed within workforces where women make up the vast majority unless an awareness of these challenges is built into primary settings (Luk-Fong, 2010). This is a systemic phenomenon where the challenges simply go unrecognized because these challenges are, perhaps, culturally off our radar. Perhaps the challenges men experience simply do not resonate within primary schools – they are invisibly ingrained in school culture. Some women are certainly guilty of victimization; we need only read the narratives shared by the men who participated in this study. Both orientations: the passive cultured challenges and the more hostile or oppressive challenges, warrant attention and solutions.

If the Roles Were Reversed

Imagine for a moment if the roles were reversed.
Imagine if men were the so-called purveyors of early childhood education.
Imagine walking into my school and seeing 55 men teaching as opposed to:
one.

Imagine only one woman in this 'old boys club'.
How would these phrases be interpreted? Would they be acceptable?

“I wish there were more women here.”

“We need more women walking in these halls.”

“Some women would liven things up here.”

As previously noted, the men who experience these challenges need to communicate their difficulties to their colleagues. The nature of these challenges need to be communicated to entire school faculties through professional development opportunities. It is important that those working with our male primary teachers do not misinterpret these challenges and dismiss the concerns of our male teachers; the challenges experienced by male primary teachers are real and should be taken seriously. Our male primary teachers should also recognize and acknowledge that their female colleagues also have an equally important and unique set of challenges. Mutually recognizing and respecting the needs of both men and women is necessary.

There were times in this study where the participants did not agree on what constitutes a challenge and what is considered an opportunity. For example, these conflicting views emerged when topics related to fatherhood and to male 'tasking' within schools were explored. In the context of fatherhood, some men in this study felt that being fathers helped them as teachers while another participant thought fatherhood complicated his teaching. With regards to male specific tasks within schools, some men embraced these tasks while other men were troubled by them. Whether one viewed fatherhood or male tasking as challenge or opportunity depended on

the individuals.

Those men who teach at the primary grades and who become fathers may find themselves with a new heightened sense of caring. Although it seems that fathers have a more innate understanding about caring for children, such generalizations are dangerous. One cannot assume that because one teacher is a father, he is therefore better suited to care for young children. Such views are stereotypical and counterproductive, especially within the realm of recruiting men to primary teaching where, coincidentally, the candidate pool is most likely made up of men who are young, single, and not fathers. As such, society's perceptions regarding who is best suited to care for young children needs to be challenged. This shift begins at school and involves all teachers. We as teachers must question what it means to care for students and all teachers must recognize that caring for students is not a responsibility anchored to any specific gender. It is important that this is understood and accepted at the school level if we are to ask the broader society to embrace such notions.

This especially needs to happen at the Grade 1, Kindergarten, and Early Childhood Education levels. Beliefs about who is best suited to educate the very young needs a 'shake up'. In this study, the men who teach kindergarten were the one's most likely to be 'attended to' or most likely to have their validity as a

“...you know I was a young guy wanting to teach kindergarten, a single guy with no kids, many times she said snide comments like what would I know about children, whats this guy know, and who is he to tell me about what's appropriate for this age group, he doesn't know a thing about kids, who's he? Where is he coming from? A lot of the negativity around that attitude that she head really did impact me...”

teacher questioned by their female colleagues. This must stop and those teachers who inappropriately question the presence of men in kindergarten and at day-cares need to be reprimanded and then educated. I was angered by a couple of narratives shared by the

participants in this study, where the participants were unjustly called-out for their role as primary teachers – situations where more than an apology was perhaps necessary.

With regards to male 'tasking' in schools, despite these task expectations being anchored by stereotypical expectations, some men in this study embraced being assigned gender specific roles. They took pride in the fact that their uniqueness

makes them appreciated and needed. Other men took pride in the fact that they are performing gentlemanly tasks. However, we should also recognize that some

“...yes they ask me to do such things; to move things around and I offer myself... sometimes I just offer my help.”

It's about being a gentleman?

“Exactly, I'll do this, I'll carry this box for you.”

men find it troubling when singled out and are annoyed when expected to perform certain tasks because they are men. The lesson here is that we collectively need to connect teachers' skills, interests, and desires with the needs within schools. Colleagues, male and female, along with administrators need to refrain from assumptions and 'come to know' fellow staff members before requesting or expecting some roles to be fulfilled. Like in other studies (Cushman, 2005), the men in this study overwhelmingly communicated positive working relationships with their colleagues and supervisors; adopting the above consideration will ensure these relationships stay strong.

Conversely, along with the challenges, there exist unique opportunities before men who teach at the primary level. Some of these opportunities are perceived and do not truly materialize for all men, yet some opportunities were confirmed within the experience of some participants. The perceived opportunities identified in this study relate the belief that men have a professional advantage in working as a 'minority' and thus will positively benefit during hiring and promotion. It is here, within the expectations held by men regarding hiring and promotion, that stereotypes

are often reinforced. This occurs when men affirm a belief that they are best suited for positions because of their gender alone.

Despite these opportunities having stereotypical underpinnings, it may exist in reality - some men may have been hired because of their

“I like to think that my chances are pretty good and doors will open because I am a male at the primary level.”

gender. At least one participant in this study reflected on the circumstances surrounding his hiring and suggested that his gender may have influenced the decision to hire him. Some participants described that although their hiring should be based on merit, they would still embrace job offers even if they were hired because of their gender. Men should however, recognize and be sensitive to the fact that their female colleagues may not have similar opportunities nor view the opportunities before men (real or imagined) with enthusiasm.

Most men in this study recognized the need to be hired based on merit rather than gender. Many of them spoke adamantly about this need, having said this, men should not discount their importance.

“It should come down to the actual quality of the teaching, and your interview and what you bring to the table. I don't think me being a man is even relevant to the job at all, should be based on your actual quality as a teacher. “

Men should feel proud of the work they do and hopefully it does translate into success. However we need to become credible champions of change and promote the need for more men in primary schools by lobbying for more men to be hired responsibly. Above all else, the best teacher should be hired, but when all things are equal what is best for schools could be a chance taken on men who are applying for primary positions. Those men who are in schools now should express an interest in becoming staff representatives on hiring committees. As staffing committees deliberate and when it is appropriate, men should become a voice for those male candidates who may,

because they are not seen as the 'nurturing women', get passed up.

Understanding the challenges and opportunities before men at the primary level is a two-way street; one that, like many of the issues discussed above, requires an initiative that builds awareness. Everyone needs to hear about and come to understand the real challenges that male primary teachers face, challenges that when conquered will make entire school workforces stronger. Men and women alike need to understand the opportunities within primary settings, without these understandings, opportunities that are capitalized on could be marred by scepticism or jealousy. If men come to expect certain opportunities solely on account of their gender, or if their female colleagues feel they are passed up by certain opportunities solely because of gender, doubt and mistrust will certainly creep into professional relationships. What cannot be forgotten however is that there is a need for more men in primary schools and there is a need to maintain positive and professional relationships among staff members.

Ultimately addressing the challenges that men and women share will have the most impact on student learning. Addressing the challenges related to primary teaching in general will make our primary teaching workforce more effective.

Researchers Researching 'Their Own'

As a researcher, as a male primary teacher, and as a participant, I have taken steps to manage the influences of reflexivity described by Schwandt (2007). As I embarked on this journey and came to know the subject matter, I found myself often questioning my own role as a primary teacher and questioning my daily decisions or professional behaviour. I do not wish to portray my 'questioning' as always a response to something negative. Great benefit has come from reflection and ongoing evaluation of our own work even when we have exhilarating

moments in the classroom. As this study was developed and implemented, I was forced to reflect on my own experiences as a male primary teacher; my reflections appear throughout this document as poetry. Sometimes I responded to something I read, sometimes I responded to something that was said to me, sometimes the poetry was a response to a combination of the two. On occasion the poetry was a response to my own actions or a response to an experience in my school. The poetry presented throughout this document represents my reflections about my work as a teacher and researcher. They are also about my increased awareness of the challenges and opportunities before male primary teachers. The poetry as a reflective and self-evaluative tool was important for me because I was not afforded the luxury of simply wearing one 'hat'. At all times during this project I was researcher and participant, teacher and learner.

Readers experience two pools of poetry. First I have presented poetry that served as a data source that was analyzed like the content of the participant conversations. A second pool of poetry emerged as this study neared its completion. This second pool of poetry was reflective in nature and represented my thoughts as I processed the emerging messages from the study and as I formulated this discussion. These newly minted poems are my visceral responses to the discussion within my head in drafting this final chapter. The poetry in this chapter is my reaction to my 'inability' to 'escape' from being involved in research that this deeply personal and so closely connected to my daily life. Even as the study wrapped up I was still wrapped up in it; I continued to need an avenue to process what I was learning.

The poetry created an avenue for me to reflect on what I have learned and to reflect on how that knowledge may have affected my personal and professional growth. In my case, the poetry was both a filter and a lens. The process of writing poetry permitted me to filter certain

messages emerging from the research. This was important because I did not want this study to become a self-fulfilling prophecy where the experiences of others became my own. It was important for me to separate my experiences from the experiences of the participants and of those participants from other studies. At the same time the poetry also provided a lens for me to examine my own experiences in light of what I learned from the literature and from the participants. The poetry permitted me to distinguish between real lived experiences and imagined experiences brought on by reflexivity. Having said that, it was very gratifying and reassuring to hear about other experiences that were similar to mine.

Two main lessons have emerged as a result of writing poetry. First I have learned that reflexivity has played a major role in my experience. This is not just about reflexive influences from reading about this topic, it is also very much about existing in a world of tensions and binaries. In conducting this research, I experienced the a type reflexivity described by Smith (2009) as institutional reflexivity; a reflexivity where personal and professional lives meet and combine and where an individual can influence research while being influenced by research itself, all-the-while, through this process, the field that is being researched is also being influenced and is influencing. In living and in going to work, through reflexivity, my experiences have been molded by all that surrounds me and by all who surround me. Those connected with this study in an advisory role, those who participated, and those with whom I work have all played a role. A similar chorus of influences and the elixir of tensions exists within the contexts of all men who teach at the primary level; it exists with their knowledge or without – but it is ever-present. These tensions and influences, as they have affected my experience, will influence their experience.

A second lesson delivered by the poetry has clearly identified themes that paralleled the documented experiences of the men who participated in this study. Each poem could easily be connected to many portions of the interview transcripts. As such, I can easily identify with the experiences of these men. By correlating my experiences to those of the participants, my experiences hold validity and deserve to be included in this research.

In learning from others, I was able to identify my own shortcomings and take initial steps to adjust my practice accordingly. It is here, where I learned from the participants, that my underlining recommendations first emerged - collaboration and education.

Researchers carry a responsibility of supporting participants; it is apparent that it is my responsibility to extend my support to the participants of this study. By participating, they supported my own growth and therefore I believe I should extend the same courtesy to them.

As suggested by the follow-up conversations, reflexive influences were experienced by the participants. To simply ignore their 'coming to know' through their participation in this study would be irresponsible. To simply ignore the reflexive influences that exist where the professional lives of these men intersect their personal lives would be irresponsible. To ignore the reflexive influence of the tensions within their professional contexts would also be irresponsible. I feel it is my responsibility to maintain relationships with these men so that I can share with them resources and knowledge with regards to men teaching at the primary level. I feel it is important that the participants be made aware that their experience may affect them more than they know, whether they are conscious of these influences or not. Those who work with these men should also become aware of the ongoing effects of natural-reflexive influences within work and personal

“Before this study no, but after this study I might think that...”

lives. These influences exist in a 'space' that is beyond the influence of the researcher and his or her questions. It is about how the participants operate within parallel experiences: experiences that are affected by the study itself but also those experiences affected by their professional praxis. Professional practices influence the study and are in turn influenced by the study, a symbiotic relationship exists and has deep affects.

Those who work with these men should become more aware of the tensions that exist in school cultures and within the messages about men who teach at the primary level. Most importantly I feel it is important that these men learn from each other, as the real lessons from this study lie within the stories these men have shared.

In learning from each other, in learning about new challenges, it is important that these men do not become discouraged or impeded by this new knowledge. With knowledge comes power, the power to initiate change around them. It is important that these men feel supported and are educated about the challenges and opportunities before them. As such, as a first action, I would like to reach out to male primary teachers in the hopes that an informal network of male primary teachers can be established in Prince Edward Island. This is not about 'bleeding hearts', but it *is* – akin to Gord Downie's song – sometimes about being lonely at the far end of a rink. This work is about collaboration and is ultimately about the quality of education our primary students receive here in the Prince Edward Island.

Specific Recommendations Summarized

The following list represents a summary of *specific* recommendations derived from the lessons learned in this study. The focus of my recommendations are anchored to: educating the community and to supporting the men in primary classrooms. These 'anchors' are reflected in the

more specific recommendations that follow.

Education must educate as many teachers as possible about the overall experience of men teaching at the primary level. This should be done through professional development and through the sharing of personal narratives. The stories shared by men could serve be presented as an interesting round-table at professional conferences and/or workshops. As more people hear these stories, then existing support for men who teach at the primary level will expand. These professional development opportunities, when combined with media tools, could also be used to educate communities about the stereotypes that exist within primary school settings and about the men who work there.

We should consider new innovative approaches for recruiting men to primary classrooms. Whether it be at the high school level when students are considering their post-secondary education or at the teacher training level. A pilot project should be conducted that would give all male preservice teachers a chance to sample the primary experience. I truly believe that our existing male teachers, including myself, would be open to ‘hosting’ a number of male preservice teachers in hopes of getting them ‘hooked’ into primary teaching. A similar cooperative or service learning project involving high school students should also be implemented.

Bachelor of Education programs should explore the possibilities of incorporating gender issues into the curriculum (or expand existing curriculum), either within a course or as a course onto itself. Such an initiative could transcend the issues presented in this study and more broadly address a range of diversity issues. Professional development opportunities that address the complexities of femininity and masculinity should be offered to existing teachers. This could be a collaborative effort between school professional development committees, the Prince Edward

Island Teachers' Federation, and UPEI.

School administrators through their ongoing meetings should be exposed to the ideas symbolic violence. Principal meeting agenda items often 'filter' down to schools but raising awareness about this issue among school board officials is an absolute first step. This will be done when this research is presented to the school boards as per their request to see the findings of this study.

The Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation should continue push for workload reform so that teachers have ample opportunity to build collaboration into their days.

After communicating the findings of this study to male primary teachers, efforts to reach out to them through informal conversation, should be initiated so that an informal network or community of practitioners can be formed.

Teachers and administrators who communicate negative and unjustified views, anchored by all types of stereotypes should consider some sort of sensitivity training or be reprimanded when appropriate. This could be a future focus of the PEITF's Diversity and Equity in Education Committee in partnership with the Employee Assistance Program.

Individuals outside school district responsibility (parents, community leaders, etc.) who communicate negative unjustified views, anchored by stereotypes, about men and their roles in primary schools should be educated about the virtues of men who teach at the primary level. This begins at schools where all teachers become proactive advocates for male primary teachers.

Finally, male primary teachers should be invited to sit on school hiring committees. Male teachers should speak to their school principals and express an interest in this as hiring committees sometimes get put together quickly on short notice. Principals who know of

individuals who are interested in this type of committee work would likely look to those who have expressed an interest.

Future Research Possibilities

There are a number of worthwhile pursuits for researchers interested in this topic. As I proceeded with this study, I consistently found myself thinking ‘If only I could do this or that.’ Although researchers could pursue any number of options I, feel there are five main research avenues to pursue.

First, I feel it is critical that we come to understand why male teachers from Prince Edward Island are choosing upper elementary, junior high, or high school teaching experiences instead of primary experiences. I believe with these individuals lay important knowledge that could clearly describe existing barriers that prevent men from pursuing primary teaching. Through ongoing interviews and larger scale surveys we could ask why teachers have chosen certain grade levels as opposed to others.

Secondly, we need to explore the perceptions that exist within Prince Edward Island regarding primary teaching and regarding men as primary teachers. This exploration should be wide ranging and far reaching, utilizing survey data and should access teachers from all levels, administrators, students, parents, preservice teachers, teacher trainers, and the greater community. Such a project might also include an analysis of messages within the media and explore potential stigmas attached male primary teaching. This study could explore the effects that the province's unique cultural heritage might have on the experiences of teachers and on perceptions about teaching.

Third, I believe it is vital that researchers extensively explore how teachers, simply by

being themselves, affect learning. This work should be comprehensive and explore the messages we send to young students by analyzing our words, tone, non-verbal communication, and reactions. I feel there is a real possibility to empower teachers to become critical practitioners by facilitating opportunities to reflect on their own teaching. Teachers could actually see and hear their own teaching by employing video and audio throughout teaching days. Similar teaching improvement tools are used in Prince Edward Island: some teachers 'go behind the glass' and teach as colleagues watch from behind a two-way mirror. If teachers can do this privately, without the fear of performing for others, then imagine the potential improvements that could be facilitated. Such research could also consider how 'states of being' translate in effective role-modelling. Such studies could begin to clarify what it exactly means to be an effective and appropriate teacher in context of the complexities of masculinity and femininity.

Fourth, researchers should continue to explore how research is conducted in Prince Edward Island, in particular, I feel more work could be done with regards to the use of arts-informed methodologies. The research questions here are endless, but the arts is a powerful window to explore 'coming to know' notions in the context of professional settings. These studies could call upon professionals to become more reflective and could help explore how professional influences affect individuals' lives. Art, for those who wish to make a leap into the arts, is a powerful way to facilitate such exploration.

Finally, future research should include an examination of what it truly means to demonstrate care for students. Such a study could involve many male and female teachers representing many orientations and cultural backgrounds. This should be conducted by interviewing teachers and then by cross referencing interview findings with classroom

observation.

I believe all five research initiatives could become part of larger comprehensive project where a multi-pronged analysis could identify cross-study themes and lessons.

Study Limitations

As with all research, this study also has limitations. This study primarily explored 'present' or 'current' lived experiences, the personal backgrounds of the participants which frame and explain individual experiences are largely under represented. Therefore, a full understanding of the participants standpoints may not be complete. Although this study did explore how these teachers came to be teachers, the study does not consider personal backgrounds such as cultural or religious backgrounds nor sexual orientation.

Readers, may also get the sense that the participant responses seemed constricted or that the participants 'held back' in explaining some experiences, thus the narratives offered by the participants may not portray a complete representation of their experience. This however, cannot be confirmed nor denied.

A third limitation of this study could exist within the findings generated from the follow-up interviews as only three participants participated in this aspect of the study. Despite this low participant rate the participants views are still valid and serve this study.

Finally, as with much interpretive work, there exists subjective influences and conclusions throughout. However, as previously explained, much effort was made to ensure the interpretations stayed true to the spirit of the participants' messages.

Summary

The discussion presented above outlines the conclusions and recommendations of this

study. I have suggested two overriding recommendations: education and collaborative support. These should be considered if we are to enhance and support the professional lives of the men who work at the primary level. Only by educating the broader community and by supporting existing male primary teachers, can we implement the more specific and practical measures discussed in this chapter. This study's original goal: to understand the experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island, has identified many conflicted messages describing the male primary teaching experience. However, it has also led me to firmly believe that the male primary teaching experience is one that can be highly rewarding and can be enjoyed by many men. This fact highlights the 'marketability' of the 'profession' and has the potential to draw more men to primary classrooms.

Final Thought

As I conclude, I would like to revisit the poem *So the Story Goes*. This poem frames the entire study and 'unpacking' it will permit me to explain the chosen title. Gord Downie of The Tragically Hip wrote "The Lonely End of the Rink" in 2006, the song is believed to be about Downie's experiences playing pond hockey as child (Cedartie, 2007). The song depicts his thoughts and feelings as a goalie, in it he describes himself as sometimes feeling isolated and/or different from the rest of his team. The title: *The Lonely End of the Pink* parallels Downie's song, the word 'pink' is a reference – albeit stereotypical – to primary workforces being mostly made up of women. The word 'lonely' refers to the fact that for some men the experience of teaching at the primary level is sometimes an isolating or lonely experience. This is true for me, but these occasional lonely feelings pale in comparison to the many positive experiences I have had teaching.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Literature Excerpts Shared During Follow-Up Conversations

The excerpts that were presented to the participants during follow-up conversations is presented below.

Excerpts are listed in order.

Topic: Do these challenges resonate?	Male teachers who find themselves within the K-3 teaching area usually leave and seek employment at other grade levels or in other fields (Foster and Newman, 2005; Cushman, 2005), generally leaving because of the four main challenges faced by men: status, salary, working within a female-dominated domain, and for fear of potential abuse allegations by students (Cushman, 2005), and to a lesser extent by the fear of workplace sexual harassment accusations (Francis, 2001).
Topic: Overall experience.	Overall, men who teach at the K-3 level have positive experiences, most enjoy teaching and working with the children and benefit from supportive and caring professional relationships within their workplaces (Cushman, 2005). Many wonder why gender is even an issue in the context of teaching (Foster & Newman, 2005) yet there are men who find primary teaching an 'uncomfortable' and 'uncertain' experience (Jones, 2007).
Topic: Primary Schools: Masculine or Feminine	Western school systems are masculine systems by design, systems where there is an emphasis on standards instead of structure and where systems are competitive and performance-driven (Arnota & Miles 2005). Education systems where, Hasse (2008) explains, women in large numbers are forced to adopt masculine behaviours thus creating the illusion that primary teaching is a feminine occupation.
Topic: Social interaction at work.	Instead of socializing with female colleagues, men engaged with activities that distanced themselves from 'women's spaces,' activities such as spending recesses with students or busying themselves within their own classrooms, and in 'refuelling' their 'masculinities' men would typically interact with male principals or male custodians; those who are generally the 'other' men on primary teaching staffs (Smith, 2004).

Topic: “Men taking up teaching posts in the lower primary sector, particularly in the early years, are seen, at best, as ‘unusual’ or ‘odd’ and, at worst, as potential threats to the children” (Carrington, 2002, p. 301) “Male teachers of young children, in particular, are not only construed as potential pedophiles but also depicted as gay. As a consequence, male teachers are often looked upon with suspicion because of the prevalence of homophobia in our society” (Carrington & Skelton, 2003, p. 259).

Male teachers as threats.

Topic: Some female colleagues view male primary teachers as strange, odd, and very feminine (Jones, 2006) and have called into question the masculinity of us. their male colleagues (Carrington, 2002).

How others see us.

Topic: Many researchers have documented widely held views that female teachers believe their male colleagues need to be ‘looked after’ or are in constant need of assistance (Skelton, 2009; Smedley & Pepperell, 2000; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003).

Being attended to.

Topic: Many men become “irritated/annoyed/disappointed at being seen as ‘special’ or being expected to be a ‘role model’” (Skelton, 2007) Gosse, Parr, and Allison (2008) presented the idea of symbolic violence in school and suggested men are indeed victims of such violence.

Role modelling expectations.

Topic: Symbolic Violence. Symbolic violence is not about physical violence but is a quiet passive under-the-surface violence where victims are alienated and/or demoralized. Such violence in the context of male primary teachers exists in the form of implicit, inactive, and/or subconscious policing of men at the primary level, perhaps born of beliefs backed by stereotypical views about male teachers at the primary level. This occurs when men break the ‘unwritten code’ which hints that men should not enter primary teaching. For men the resulting difficulties often amounts to situations where they are left ignored, deprived of knowledge, and without mentoring.

Topic: Classroom composition. Ludowyke’s (2001) study shared evidence that male teachers were frequently assigned the role of addressing the needs of difficult children

Topic: Men’s roles in schools. There exists interesting findings related to “men’s work” within schools. Many believe men are best suited for assignments related to physical education and technology because men are more task oriented and utilitarian (Sargent, 2000). Another example of men’s work within schools and further contributing to the stereotypical view that suggests men should not teach very young children is the fact that men are often assigned to the highest grades within buildings (Ashley, 2003; Carrington, 2002).

- Topic: First choice career? Williams and Villemez (1993 as cited in Smith) noted most men never intended to teach within a female-dominated profession. "They claim that 'the majority of men seem to enter female-dominated occupations, not through a revolving door, but rather through a "trapdoor" - most were not seeking such entry"
- Topic: Tokenism and Glass Escalator Some female teachers believe their male colleagues did not earn their positions but were placed to fulfil the 'token male' role and fear men will be fast-tracked for promotion (Williams, 1992).
- Topic: Nurturance and Care Jones (2007) suggested men are more formal or calculated in the way that they demonstrate caring, often in contrast to traditional visible 'caring' behaviours such as hugging, hand holding, sitting on laps, or shoulders to cry on. Men do think about "the ways they can demonstrate care in practice" (Smedley and Peperell, 2000, p. 272)
- Topic: Boys Achievement Research suggests a teacher's gender has little or no impact on boys achievement (Harnett & Lee, 2003; Connolly, 2006; Skelton, 2001; Roulston & Mills, 2000).
- Topic: Challenging expectations The expectation that the male teacher will provide an effective role model and the confusion regarding the explicit characteristics they are expected to model has long been an issue for men... that one is expected to model particular, but unspecified, male characteristics and behaviours is in itself daunting. To know you are expected to be a "father substitute" could be almost inconceivable, especially for young, single males. (Cushman, 2005, p. 232)
- Topic: Identity Negotiation Francis and Skelton (2001) reported situations where male teachers took deliberate steps to portray themselves as 'real men' in order to reestablish their masculinities within a 'feminized' profession.

Appendix B

Initial Interview Guides

Table B1

Interview Guide for Preservice Primary Teachers.

Prompt:	Expanding Prompts:
Describe how you came to be a teacher.	<p>Expand on how you came to decide to enter teacher training.</p> <p>Describe your journey; from your decision to enter the field to your current situation as a student at UPEI.</p> <p>Describe the support or discouragement you may have received from friends and family.</p>
In reflecting on your practicum describe your relationships with your students.	<p>What are your thoughts regarding being a role model for students?</p> <p>How did you demonstrate to your students that you cared?</p>
Describe your day-to-day practicum life as a primary teacher.	<p>Expand specifically on your relationships with your fellow students, cooperating teachers, and teaching colleagues.</p> <p>What was it like to be a male teacher working in a workspace comprised mostly of women?</p>
As a primary teacher describe the challenges you faced.	<p>Were the challenges you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?</p>
As a future primary teacher describe the opportunities before you.	<p>Are the opportunities you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?</p>

Table B2

Interview Guide for Active Primary Teachers.

Prompt:	Expanding Prompts:
Describe how you came to be a teacher.	<p>Expand on how you came to decide to be a teacher</p> <p>Describe your journey from your decision to enter the career to your present teaching assignment.</p> <p>Describe the support or discouragement you may have received from friends and family.</p>
Describe your relationships with your students.	<p>What are your thoughts regarding being a role model for students?</p> <p>How do you demonstrate to your students that you care?</p>
Describe your day-to-day work life as a primary teacher.	<p>Expand specifically on your relationships with your colleagues.</p> <p>What is it like to be a male teacher working in a workspace comprised mostly of women?</p>
As a primary teacher describe the challenges you face.	<p>Are the challenges you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?</p>
As a primary teacher describe the opportunities before you.	<p>Are the opportunities you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?</p>

Table B3

Interview Guide for Past or Retired Primary Teachers.

Prompt:	Expanding Prompts:
Describe how you came to be a teacher.	<p>Expand on how you came to decide to enter the teaching career.</p> <p>Describe your journey; from your decision to enter the field to your primary teaching experience.</p> <p>Describe the support or discouragement you may have received from friends and family.</p>
In reflecting on your career describe the relationships you've had with your students.	<p>What are your thoughts regarding teachers being a role models for students?</p> <p>How did you demonstrate to your students that you cared?</p>
In reflecting on your career describe your day-to-day work life as a primary teacher.	<p>Expand specifically on your past relationships with your teaching colleagues.</p> <p>What was it like to be a male teacher working in a workspace comprised mostly of women?</p>
As a primary teacher describe the challenges you faced.	Were the challenges you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?
Describe the opportunities you recognized as a primary teacher.	Are the opportunities you described specifically related to being a male primary teacher? How so?

Appendix C

Follow-Up Conversation Guide

- Describe how your own experiences have changed or may change as a consequence of participating in this study or as a consequence of becoming more aware of the challenges/opportunities that men in general experience when teaching at the primary level.
- Present related findings from literature review (Listed in Appendix A):
- What are your thoughts regarding the research in this area?
- In hearing about the issues/opportunities that some male and female teachers experience does anything resonate with you or remind you of an experience you may have had? Explain.
- In light of participating in this interview where you have become more aware of the challenges/opportunities that men in general experience when teaching at the primary level, describe how your own experiences may change as a consequence of participating in this follow-up conversation.

Appendix D

UPEI Research Ethics Certificate



550 University Avenue
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada C1A 4P3

October 4, 2011

Mr. David Kerwin
Faculty of Education

Dear Mr. Kerwin,

Re: REB Ref # 6004418

“The Lonely end of the pink: Exploring lived-experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.”

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that the proposal has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to the ORD prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to ORD not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal form can be downloaded from the ORD website
http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacey MacKinnon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stacey MacKinnon, Ph.D.
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board
cc. Dr. Ray Doiron, Faculty of Education

Appendix E

School Board and Faculty of Education Permission

Eastern School District
P.O. Box 8600
Charlottetown, PE, C1A 8V7

October 17, 2011

David Kerwin
c/o Faculty of Education
University of Prince Edward Island
550 University Avenue
Charlottetown, PE, C1A 4P3

Dear David:

This letter is in response to your request to conduct research within the Eastern School District during the 2011-2012 entitled "The lonely end of the pink: Exploring lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island." On behalf of the External Research Review Committee, I am pleased to inform that your request to conduct research has been cleared.

In documentation that was provided you described the procedure for recruiting two teachers as research participants. Please proceed in this manner and let the participants know that you have received clearance to proceed from the Eastern School District.

Please note the following:

- Observe the section of Board Regulation LC-R - *Research Requests from External Agencies* that addresses the responsibilities of researchers. Refer to a copy of the board regulation at the following web page http://www.edu.pe.ca/esd/main/external_research_requests.htm
- This letter of clearance expires on the same day as your approval from the UPEI Research Ethics Board, which is October 4, 2012. Upon completion of your study, please furnish this office with a summary report.

Best regards for your research project.

Sincerely,

Kevin MacLeod, PhD
Chair, External Research Review Committee

c: Ricky Hood, Superintendent of Education, Eastern School District
Dr. Tamara Hubley-Little, Director of Curriculum Delivery, Eastern School District
Dr. Ray Doiron, Thesis Advisor, UPEI Faculty of Education

Figure E1. Eastern School District permission correspondence. This figure contains the official Eastern School District letter granting permission to proceed with this study.

To: "David Kerwin" <[REDACTED]>
Cc:
Date: Thu, 08 Dec 2011 11:04:33 -0400
Subject: Research proposal
Hi David:

I am the newly appointed chair of the WSB External Research Committee. Please be advised that you may proceed with your research as proposed.

All the best with your important work,
Laura

Laura Cudmore
Board Principal
Western School Board of PEI
272 MacEwen Road, Summerside, PEI
C1N 2P7
Phone: [\(902\) 888-8427](tel:9028888427)
Fax: [\(902\) 888-8449](tel:9028888449)

Figure E2. Western School Board permission correspondence. This figure contains the correspondence with the Western School Board where permission to proceed with this study was granted.

From: "Gilles Benoit" <[REDACTED]>
To: "David Kerwin" <[REDACTED]>
Cc:
Date: Tue, 11 Oct 2011 11:26:04 -0300
Subject: Re: Rép. : Research Proposal
Rebonjour David,
You have my authorization to approach our teacher.
Thanks!
Gilles

Gilles Benoit
Directeur général
La Commission scolaire de langue française
1596, route 124, Abram-Village
[902-854-2975](tel:902-854-2975)

>>> David Kerwin 10/11/2011 9:53 am >>>
yes
Thank You

>>> Gilles Benoit 10/11/2011 8:27 AM >>>
Bonjour David,
I have only one question. Is this research in all three boards?
Gilles

Gilles Benoit
Directeur général
La Commission scolaire de langue française
1596, route 124, Abram-Village
[902-854-2975](tel:902-854-2975)

Figure E3. French Language School Board permission correspondence. This figure contains the correspondence with the French Language School Board where permission to proceed with this study was granted.

From: "Miles Turnbull" <[REDACTED]>
To: "David Kerwin" <[REDACTED]>
Cc: "Ray Doiron" <[REDACTED]>
Date: Wed, 12 Oct 2011 13:07:24 -0300
Subject: Permission
David

I hereby grant you permission to contact male BEd. students in our program to participate in your MED thesis research study.

Best wishes with this interesting study! I am VERY interested in what you find out.

Miles Turnbull

Miles Turnbull, Ph.D.
Dean (Interim)
Coordinator, Graduate Programs
Editor in Chief/Rédacteur en chef
Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics/Revue canadienne de linguistique appliquée
Faculty of Education, UPEI
550 University Avenue
Charlottetown, PE C1A 4P3
[902-620-5051](tel:902-620-5051)
FAX [902-566-0416](tel:902-566-0416)

Figure E4. UPEI Faculty of Education permission correspondence. This figure contains the correspondence with the UPEI Faculty of Education where permission to proceed with this study was granted.

Appendix F

Information Sheets for School Boards and Faculty of Education

<p>Study Title: <i>The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.</i></p> <p>David Kerwin, Master of Education student, UPEI</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>[Eastern School Board Address]</p> <p>Dear [Name of Eastern School District Representative]:</p> <p>I am seeking permission to invite male primary teachers from the Eastern School District to take part in a research study. This research study is described below; the study will culminate in the form of a Master's level thesis to be published in the Spring of 2012.</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to gain new understandings about the experiences of male teachers working at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain.</p> <p>Teachers who agree to take part will be asked to sign consent forms and are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Teachers are being asked for consent to digitally record their comments made in interviews and during the focus group. They are also being asked for consent to make copies of any written pieces they create as a result of participating in this study. They are also being asked for permission to publish their comments verbatim in full or in part. They are further being asked permission to be contacted for future studies or follow up studies.</p> <p>Participants will partake in 2 interviews and 1 focus group. The first interview, to be conducted in October, will take approximately 2 ½ hours. A follow-up conversation, to be conducted in November, will be shorter (approximately 1 hour). The focus group will be held at a convenient location and will last approximately 2 ½ hours; it will occur in November. All participants will also have an opportunity to create written representations reflecting their experience as primary teachers. 10 individuals will participate in this study, 2 will be teachers from the Eastern School District.</p> <p>All information collected from participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations) and participants' real names and the names of the schools or the school board where they work will not be disclosed. All responses are kept confidential and any names shared in interviews, written pieces, and in the focus group will not be listed in the final documents or transcripts; they will be published as pseudonyms. All transcribed data will be securely stored for 5 years, recorded data will be destroyed after the transcriptions are created.</p> <p>Participants will have an opportunity to review any comments shared in interviews and during the focus group. Participants will have an opportunity to express concerns or suggest changes to the transcript that they review.</p> <p>There are minimal risks associated with the participants sharing their experiences as teachers; readers of the study's final documents can infer and make assumptions about what they read but because of the study's built in confidentiality and anonymity features, readers will not be able to connect published findings to participants/schools/boards. All research will be conducted after of regular school hours (after 4:00pm) and will not involve students.</p> <p>This study will provide participants with the opportunity to form collaborative relationships with other men who work at the primary level and to learn about the challenges and opportunities before them as primary teachers.</p> <p>As noted, by completing this study I am fulfilling the necessary requirements of a Master of Education degree and the goal of this study is to simply understand the experiences of men, like myself, who teach at the primary level. There is no commercial benefit for me in completing this study.</p> <p>All participants will have an opportunity to see the pre-published results of this study.</p> <p>The study was approved by UPEI's Research Ethics Board and is now awaiting approval from the island's three school Boards.</p> <p>If you have any immediate questions please contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED] If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your district's participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED]</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.</p> <p>Sincerely:</p> <p>David Kerwin</p>
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Figure F1. Information sheet for the Eastern School District. This appendix contains the information sheet sent to the Eastern School District outlining this study.

The Lonely End of the Pink

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

David Kerwin, Master of Education student, UPEI

Date:

[Western School Board Address]

Dear [Name of Western School Board Representative]:

I am seeking permission to invite male primary teachers from the Western School Board to take part in a **research study**. This research study is described below; the study will culminate in the form of a Master's level thesis to be published in the Spring of 2012.

The purpose of this study is to gain new understandings about the experiences of male teachers working at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain.

Teachers who agree to take part will be asked to sign consent forms and are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Teachers are being asked for consent to digitally record their comments made in interviews and during the focus group. They are also being asked for consent to make copies of any written pieces they create as a result of participating in this study. They are also being asked for permission to publish their comments verbatim in full or in part. They are further being asked permission to be contacted for future studies or follow up studies.

Participants will partake in 2 interviews and 1 focus group. The first interview, to be conducted in October, will take approximately 2 ½ hours. A follow-up conversation, to be conducted in November, will be shorter (approximately 1 hour). The focus group will be held at a convenient location and will last approximately 2 ½ hours; it will occur in November. All participants will also have an opportunity to create written representations reflecting their experience as primary teachers. 10 individuals will participate in this study, 2 will be teachers from the Western School Board.

All information collected from participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations) and participants' real names and the names of the schools or the school board where they work will not be disclosed. All responses are kept confidential and any names shared in interviews, written pieces, and in the focus group will not be listed in the final documents or transcripts; they will be published as pseudonyms. All transcribed data will be securely stored for 5 years, recorded data will be destroyed after the transcriptions are created.

Participants will have an opportunity to review any comments shared in interviews and during the focus group. Participants will have an opportunity to express concerns or suggest changes to the transcript that they review.

There are minimal risks associated with the participants sharing their experiences as teachers; readers of the study's final documents can infer and make assumptions about what they read but because of the study's built in confidentiality and anonymity features, readers will not be able to connect published findings to participants/schools/boards. All research will be conducted after of regular school hours (after 4:00pm) and will **not** involve students.

This study will provide participants with the opportunity to form collaborative relationships with other men who work at the primary level and to learn about the challenges and opportunities before them as primary teachers.

As noted, by completing this study I am fulfilling the necessary requirements of a Master of Education degree and the goal of this study is to simply understand the experiences of men, like myself, who teach at the primary level. There is no commercial benefit for me in completing this study.

All participants will have an opportunity to see the pre-published results of this study.

The study was approved by UPEI's Research Ethics Board and is now awaiting approval from the island's three school Boards.

If you have any immediate questions please contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED] If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your board's participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902) 620-5104, [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.
Sincerely:

David Kerwin

Figure F2. Information sheet for the Western School Board. This appendix contains the information sheet sent to the Western School Board outlining this study.

The Lonely End of the Pink

<p>Study Title: <i>The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.</i></p> <p>David Kerwin, Master of Education student, UPEI</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>[La Commission scolaire de langue française Representative]</p> <p>Dear [Name of La Commission scolaire de langue française Representative]:</p> <p>I am seeking permission to invite male primary teachers from La Commission scolaire de langue française to take part in a research study. This research study is described below; the study will culminate in the form of a Master's level thesis to be published in the Spring of 2012.</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to gain new understandings about the experiences of male teachers working at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain.</p> <p>Teachers who agree to take part will be asked to sign consent forms and are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Teachers are being asked for consent to digitally record their comments made in interviews and during the focus group. They are also being asked for consent to make copies of any written pieces they create as a result of participating in this study. They are also being asked for permission to publish their comments verbatim in full or in part. They are further being asked permission to be contacted for future studies or follow up studies.</p> <p>Participants will partake in 2 interviews and 1 focus group. The first interview, to be conducted in October, will take approximately 2 ½ hours. A follow-up conversation, to be conducted in November, will be shorter (approximately 1 hour). The focus group will be held at a convenient location and will last approximately 2 ½ hours; it will occur in November. All participants will also have an opportunity to create written representations reflecting their experience as primary teachers. 10 individuals will participate in this study, 2 will be teachers from La Commission scolaire de langue française.</p> <p>All information collected from participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations) and participants' real names and the names of the schools or the school board where they work will not be disclosed. All responses are kept confidential and any names shared in interviews, written pieces, and in the focus group will not be listed in the final documents or transcripts; they will be published as pseudonyms. All transcribed data will be securely stored for 5 years, recorded data will be destroyed after the transcriptions are created.</p> <p>Participants will have an opportunity to review any comments shared in interviews and during the focus group. Participants will have an opportunity to express concerns or suggest changes to the transcript that they review.</p> <p>There are minimal risks associated with the participants sharing their experiences as teachers; readers of the study's final documents can infer and make assumptions about what they read but because of the study's built in confidentiality and anonymity features, readers will not be able to connect published findings to participants/schools/boards. All research will be conducted after of regular school hours (after 4:00pm) and will not involve students.</p> <p>This study will provide participants with the opportunity to form collaborative relationships with other men who work at the primary level and to learn about the challenges and opportunities before them as primary teachers.</p> <p>As noted, by completing this study I am fulfilling the necessary requirements of a Master of Education degree and the goal of this study is to simply understand the experiences of men, like myself, who teach at the primary level. There is no commercial benefit for me in completing this study.</p> <p>All participants will have an opportunity to see the pre-published results of this study.</p> <p>Although I do speak French, my ability to use French as a working language would not adequately meet the needs of the participants or purposes of this study. I sincerely apologize for this but I do hope this does not hinder the possibilities of francophone teachers' participation in this important study.</p> <p>The study was approved by UPEI's Research Ethics Board and is now awaiting approval from the island's three school Boards.</p> <p>If you have any immediate questions please contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED]. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your board's participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED].</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.</p> <p>Sincerely:</p> <p>David Kerwin</p>
--

Figure F3. Information sheet for the French Language School Board. This appendix contains the information sheet sent to the French Language School Board outlining this study.

Date:

[Faculty of Education Address]

Dear [Name of Faculty of Education Representative]:

I am seeking permission to invite male primary preservice teachers from UPEI to take part in a **research study**. This research study is described below; the study will culminate in the form of a Master's level thesis to be published in the Spring of 2012.

The purpose of this study is to gain new understandings about the experiences of male teachers working at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain.

Preservice teachers who agree to take part will be asked to sign consent forms and are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Preservice Teachers are being asked for consent to digitally record their comments made in interviews and during the focus group. They are also being asked for consent to make copies of any written pieces they create as a result of participating in this study. They are also being asked for permission to publish their comments verbatim in full or in part. They are further being asked permission to be contacted for future studies or follow up studies.

Participants will partake in 2 interviews and 1 focus group. The first interview, to be conducted in October, will take approximately 2 ½ hours. A follow-up conversation, to be conducted in November, will be shorter (approximately 1 hour). The focus group will be held at a convenient location and will last approximately 2 ½ hours; it will occur in November. All participants will also have an opportunity to create written representations reflecting their experience as primary teachers. Ten teachers will participate in this study, 2 will be individuals from the UPEI BEd. program.

All information collected from participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations) and participants' real names and the names of the schools or the school board where they work will not be disclosed. All responses are kept confidential and any names shared in interviews, written pieces, and in the focus group will not be listed in the final documents or transcripts; they will be published as pseudonyms. All transcribed data will be securely stored for 5 years, recorded data will be destroyed after the transcriptions are created.

Participants will have an opportunity to review any comments shared in interviews and during the focus group. Participants will have an opportunity to express concerns or suggest changes to the transcript that they review.

There are minimal risks associated with the participants sharing their experiences as teachers; readers of the study's final documents can infer and make assumptions about what they read but because of the study's built in confidentiality and anonymity features, readers will not be able to connect published findings to participants/schools/boards. Preservice participants will be assured that this study is in no way connected to their BEd. program and will not affect their grades. All research will be conducted outside the participants regularly scheduled class hours.

This study will provide participants with the opportunity to form collaborative relationships with other men who work at the primary level and to learn about the challenges and opportunities before them as primary teachers.

As noted, by completing this study I am fulfilling the necessary requirements of a Master of Education degree and the goal of this study is to simply understand the experiences of men, like myself, who teach at the primary level. There is no commercial benefit for me in completing this study.

All participants will have an opportunity to see the pre-published results of this study.

The study was approved by UPEI's Research Ethics Board and is now awaiting the faculty's approval.

If you have any immediate questions please contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED]. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your faculty's participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED].

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Sincerely:

David Kerwin

Figure F4. Information sheet for the Faculty of Education, UPEI. This appendix contains the information sheet sent to UPEI's Faculty of Education outlining this study.

Appendix G

Participant Cover Letter / Invitation

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

David Kerwin



[Date]

[Recipient's Address]

Dear [Recipient]:

As per our conversation you will find an attached information sheet related to the discussed study. Please take the time to read the highlighted features of the study as informed consent is required before you agree to participate.

Thank you so much for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

David Kerwin

Appendix H

Information Sheet for Informed Consent

Information Sheet for Informed Consent

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

David Kerwin, Master of Education student, UPEI

Dear [Name of Participant]:

You are being invited to take part in a **research study**. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take some time to read the following information carefully.

The purpose of this study is to gain new understandings about the experiences of male teachers working at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain. You have been chosen to participate because you are either a) currently teaching at the primary level; b) earning a BEd. in an early years or kindergarten stream; c) a retired teacher who taught at the primary level; d) a teacher who has taught at the primary level but who has left the K-3 grades

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign consent forms and you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. You are being asked for consent to digitally record your comments made in interviews and during the focus group. You are also being asked for consent make to copies of any written pieces you create as a result of participating in this study. You are also being asked for permission to publish your comments verbatim in full or in part. You are also being asked permission to be contacted for future studies or follow up studies.

Participants are asked to partake in 2 interviews and 1 focus group. The first interview, to be conducted in October, will take approximately 2 ½ hours and will be scheduled at your convenience in a location that is convenient for you. A follow-up conversation, to be conducted in November, will be shorter (approximately 1 hour). The focus group will be held at a convenient location and will last approximately 2 ½ hours; it will occur in November. All participants will have an opportunity to create written representations reflecting their experience as primary teachers 10 individuals will participate in this study.

All information collected from participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations) and participants' real names and the names of the schools where they work will not be disclosed. All responses are kept confidential and any names shared in interviews, written pieces, and in the focus group will not be listed in the final documents or transcripts they will be published as pseudonyms. All transcribed data will be securely stored for 5 years, recorded data will be destroyed after the transcriptions are created.

You will have an opportunity to review any comments you shared in interviews and during the focus group. You will have an opportunity to express concerns or suggest changes to the transcript that you review.

There are minimal risks associated with you sharing your experiences as a teacher; readers of the study's final documents can infer and make assumptions about what they read but because of the study's built in confidentiality and anonymity features, readers will not be able to connect published findings to participants. All research will be conducted after school hours (after 4:00PM).

This study will provide you with the opportunity to form collaborative relationships with other men who work at the primary level and to learn about the challenges and opportunities before you as primary teacher.

By completing this study I am fulfilling the necessary requirements of a Master of Education degree and the goal of this study is to simply understand the experiences of men, like myself, who teach at the primary level. There is no commercial benefit for me in completing this study. The results of this study will be published in 2012 in the form of an Education Master's thesis.

All participants will have an opportunity to see the pre-published results of this study.

You will be contacted shortly to discuss your possible participation and so that you may pose questions.

The study was approved by UPEI's Research Ethics Board and the island's three school Boards. If you have any immediate questions please contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED]. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED].

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Appendix I

General Consent Form

Consent Form – General

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

Date: [Participant inserts date]

I, [Participant inserts printed name here], volunteer to participate in the research project:

The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island

I understand the project's purpose is to explore to explore the lived experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island and to determine if these experiences align with current research which suggests most men find the experience of teaching at the primary level a positive and rewarding experience yet some men do find the experience, in part or in whole, uncomfortable and uncertain.

I received the information letter sent and:

- I am agreeing to participate in the study described above by signing this CONSENT FORM.
- I recognize my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any point.
- I know the identity and affiliation of researcher.
- I have the contact information of the individual conducting the study.
- I understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand I will be asked to participate in 2 interviews, a focus group, and will be asked to submit written piece(s) about my experience as a primary teacher.
- I understand the time commitment associated with this study.
- I recognize I may participate in this study either in part or in whole.
- I understand and accept the use of pseudonyms and the reasons for using pseudonyms.
- I understand and accept how anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained.
- I understand that confidentiality is confined to the limits of the law.
- I understand the risks and benefits associated with my participation within this study.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review all transcripts related to my contribution to the study and I have the right to address my concerns related to the transcripts and to recant any of my responses.
- I understand I will be offered a summary of the findings of this study.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to audio/video taping, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to use my comments in part or in whole in the final documents of this study, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand I may be contacted for participation in future studies.
- I understand I can keep a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
- I understand that if I have any questions I can contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED] or research advisor Dr. Ray Doiron 902-566-0694 or by e-mail at [REDACTED].
- I have read the information provided to me about this research study and understand the requirements, purpose of the study, potential benefits and risks associated with participating in this study.
- I affirm my informed consent to the participation of in this study by signing below.
- I understand no waiver of rights will be sought

If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED]

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Appendix J

Initial Interview Consent Form

Consent Form – Initial Interview

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

Date: [Participant inserts date]

I, [Participant inserts printed name here], volunteer to participate in the initial interview:

I understand the interview's purpose is to explore to explore my lived experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island.

I have given general informed consent to my participation in the overall study and:

- I am agreeing to participate in the interview described above by signing this CONSENT FORM.
- I recognize my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any point.
- I know the identity and affiliation of researcher.
- I understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand I will interviewed for approximately 2 ½ hours.
- I recognize I may participate in this interview either in part or in whole.
- I understand I may choose not to answer one or all of the interviewers questions without giving any reason
- I understand and accept the use of pseudonyms and the reasons for using pseudonyms.
- I understand and accept how anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained.
- I understand that confidentiality is confined to the limits of the law.
- I understand the risks and benefits associated with my participation in this interview.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review all transcripts related to my contribution to this interview and I have the right to address my concerns related to the transcripts and to recant any of my responses.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to audio/video taping this interview, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to use my comments in part or in whole in the final documents of this study, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand I can keep a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
- I understand that if I have any questions I can contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED] or research advisor, Dr. Ray Doiron 902-566-0694 or by e-mail at [REDACTED].
- I affirm my informed consent to the participation of in this interview by signing below.
- I understand no waiver of rights will be sought.

If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED]

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____

Appendix K

Consent Form – Follow-up Conversation

Consent Form – Focus Group, Paired Interview, or Follow-up Conversation

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

Date: [Participant inserts date]

I, [Participant inserts printed name here], volunteer to participate in the Focus Group:

I understand the Focus Group's purpose is to explore the experiences of male primary teachers in Prince Edward Island and to be presented with recent and relevant research related to male primary teachers / teaching.

I have given general informed consent to my participation in the overall study and:

- I am agreeing to participate in the Focus Group described above by signing this CONSENT FORM.
- I recognize my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any point.
- I know the identity and affiliation of researcher.
- I understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand I will Focus Grouped for approximately 2 ½ hours.
- I recognize I may participate in this Focus Group either in part or in whole.
- I understand I may choose not to answer one or all of the Focus Groupers questions without giving any reason
- I understand and accept the use of pseudonyms and the reasons for using pseudonyms.
- I understand and accept how anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained.
- I understand that confidentiality is confined to the limits of the law.
- I understand the risks and benefits associated with my participation in this Focus Group.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review all transcripts related to my contribution to this Focus Group and I have the right to address my concerns related to the transcripts and to recant any of my responses.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to audio/video taping this Focus Group, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand that the researcher requested permission to use my comments in part or in whole in the final documents of this study, I hereby grant that permission.
- I understand I can keep a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
- I understand that if I have any questions I can contact David Kerwin at [REDACTED] or research advisor, Dr. Ray Doiron 902-566-0694 or by e-mail at [REDACTED]
- I affirm my informed consent to the participation of in this Focus Group by signing below.
- I understand no waiver of rights will be sought
- I understand I must sign a confidentiality agreement in order to participate in this focus group.

If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, [REDACTED]

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____

Appendix L

Non-Disclosure Agreement / Responsibility for Lead Investigator

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

I, _____ hereby agree to maintain the confidentiality of information disclosed during focus group or interview sessions observed live, recorded, or in any other manner, including data generated from the participants' written representations as follows:

- 1) Definition - For purposes hereof, "Confidential Information" (CI) shall mean information or material obtained or observed while conducting a focus group, interview, or in viewing and reading written representations, conducted by or for the benefit of the study hereof. By example and without limitation, Confidential Information includes
 - a) Any information about any participant in the in the study that is not currently in the public domain or readily available to the public.
 - b) Any information that is shared during focus groups, interviews, and written representations related to the lived experiences of the participants and colleagues with whom the participants work.
 - c) The topics and questions presented in the interview, focus group, or written representations.
 - d) Also included as confidential is any participant's Respondent's Personally Identifiable Information ("PII"). PII shall mean a person's identity or information that might reasonably allow identification of the person.
- 2) I shall at all times hold in trust, keep confidential and not disclose to any third party or make any use of the Confidential Information.
- 3) I shall at all times hold in trust, keep confidential and not disclose to any third party or make any use of the identity or PII of any Participant(s) / Respondent(s) involved in the Focus Group.
- 4) I will use reasonable efforts to keep my own and fellow participants / respondents' CI and PII secure from any third party access.
- 5) I will comply with all provincial, federal, and international statutes and regulations governing privacy.
- 6) If I am to share written representations with fellow participants during focus groups then I recognize the necessary precautions that must be taken to ensure anonymity and confidentiality with regards to the author(s). I recognize and accept that I must seek verbal permission from the participant / author before I share the representations in the focus group. A participant may explicitly request that their representations not be shared in focus group
- 7) The undersigned agrees to the above terms of this agreement.

Signed _____ Date _____

Printed _____

Appendix M

Debriefing Scripts

Debriefing Script – Interview # 1

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived-experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. The purpose of this interview was to explore your experiences as a primary teacher. School improvement discourses often suggest more men are needed in primary schools however the actual experience of these men are largely under-researched, your contributions to this study through this interview will add to the knowledge related to men who teach at the primary level. A goal of this interview was to learn about the challenges and opportunities experienced by men like you who teach at the primary grades. The results of this research will provide education stakeholders with a glimpse at the experiences encountered by those who teach at the primary level. These findings may assist stakeholders with decisions related to the improvement of primary (K-3) education in Prince Edward Island. You will receive a copy of your responses soon and you may review these transcripts in private or with my assistance.

Thanks again for your participation, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact can David Kerwin at niwrekdivad@gmail.com or research advisor Dr. Ray Doiron 902-566-0694 or by e-mail at raydoiron@upe.ca.

If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, lmacphee@upe.ca

Figure M1. Debriefing script for initial interview. Figure contains debriefing script used in the initial interview.

Debriefing Script – Interview # 2

Study Title: *The lonely end of the pink: Exploring the lived-experiences of men who teach at the K-3 level in Prince Edward Island.*

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. The purpose of this interview was to explore your experiences as a primary teacher. School improvement discourses often suggest more men are needed in primary schools however the actual experience of these men are largely under-researched, your contributions to this study through this interview will add to the knowledge related to men who teach at the primary level. A goal of this interview was to continue to learn about the challenges and opportunities experienced by men like you who teach at the primary grades. The results of this research will provide education stakeholders with a glimpse at the experiences encountered by those who teach at the primary level. These findings may assist stakeholders with decisions related to the improvement of primary (K-3) education in Prince Edward Island. You will receive a copy of your responses soon and you may review these transcripts in private or with my assistance.

Thanks again for your participation, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact can David Kerwin at niwrekdivad@gmail.com or research advisor Dr. Ray Doiron 902-566-0694 or by e-mail at raydoiron@upe.ca.

If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902)620-5104, lmacphee@upe.ca

Figure M2. Debriefing script for follow-up conversation. Figure contains debriefing script used in the follow-up conversation.

Appendix N

Interview Prompts Linked to Existing Research.

Table N1

Interview Prompt 1 Linked to Research.

<i>Research Background</i> <i>Williams and Villemez (1993 as cited in Smith 2004) noted most men never intended to teach within a female-dominated profession.</i> <i>Even before men enter their teaching training men feel their status is threatened as friends and family question their decision to pursue teaching (Smith, 2004).</i> <i>Many men pondered a variety of career options instead of teaching (Mullholland & Hansen, 2003).</i>			
Prompt 1	Preservice Teacher	Active Teacher	Retired/Past Teacher
	Describe how you came to be a teacher.	Describe how you came to be a teacher.	Describe how you came to be a teacher.

Table N2

Interview Prompt 2 Linked to Research

<p><i>Research Background:</i> Bradley (2010) suggested that caring or the act of caring is highly individualized, regardless of biological sex or sexual orientation or parental experience or otherwise, and is guided by a person’s philosophy about children and learning.</p> <p>The expectation that the male teacher will provide an effective role model and the confusion regarding the explicit characteristics they are expected to model has long been an issue for men... that one is expected to model particular, but unspecified, male characteristics and behaviours is in itself daunting. To know you are expected to be a “father substitute” could be almost inconceivable, especially for young, single males. (Cushman, 2005, p. 232)</p>			
Prompt 2	Preservice Teacher	Active Teacher	Retired/Past Teacher
	In reflecting on your practicum describe your relationships with your students.	Describe your relationships with your students.	In reflecting on your career describe the relationships you’ve had with your students.

Table N3

Interview Prompt 3 Linked to Research

<div>Research Background: Overall, men who teach at the K-3 level have positive experiences, most enjoy teaching and working with the children and benefit from supportive and caring professional relationships within their workplaces (Cushman, 2005). The feminine domain shall, as Harnet and Lee (2003) suggested, be defined as a gender imbalance where females outnumber males and as such, some men do find primary teaching to be an isolating experience (Thornton, 1999).</div>			
Prompt 3	Preservice Teacher	Active Teacher	Retired/Past Teacher
	Describe your day-to-day practicum life as a primary teacher.	Describe your day-to-day work life as a primary teacher.	In reflecting on your career describe your day-to-day work life as a primary teacher.

Table N4

Interview Prompt 4 Linked to Research

<p><i>Research Background:</i> <i>Primary teachers, at least, early in their career find themselves constantly in a state of being and becoming (Skelton, 2009) and in finding themselves within a minority make a conscious effort to negotiate their identities, identities not necessarily representative of their true persona but one that serves their personal or professional ambition or needs (Francis & Skelton, 2001).</i></p> <p><i>Some female teachers believe their male colleagues did not earn their positions but were placed to fulfil the ‘token male’ role and fear men will be fast-tracked for promotion (Williams, 1992).</i></p> <p><i>Many researchers have documented widely held views that female teachers believe their male colleagues need to be ‘looked after’ or are in constant need of assistance, a perception that, not surprisingly, frustrates many male primary teachers (Skelton, 2009; Smedley & Pepperell, 2000; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003).</i></p>			
Prompt 4	Preservice Teacher	Active Teacher	Retired/Past Teacher
	As a primary teacher describe the challenges you faced.	As a primary teacher describe the challenges you face.	As a primary teacher describe the challenges you faced.

Table N5.

Interview Prompt 5 Linked to Research

<div>Research Background: Whether in quiet conversation in school staffrooms or through highly public features in national newspapers it seems the call for more male teachers in elementary schools frequents school improvement discourses (Abraham, 2010). In some studies, men themselves have even acknowledged possible 'fast-tracking' in primary settings (Carrington, 2002). Overall, this glass escalator phenomenon as suggested by Mills, Martino, and Lingard (2004) does appear valid as men do occupy a disproportionate number of management or administrative positions.</div>			
Prompt 5	Preservice Teacher	Active Teacher	Retired/Past Teacher
	As a future primary teacher describe the opportunities before you.	As a primary teacher describe the opportunities before you.	Describe the opportunities you recognized as a primary teacher.

Appendix O

Initial Interview Coding

Appendix O outlines the coding process, new emerging concepts, as described above, are noted using: “[new]” across all coding levels. Table O1 outlines level 1 coding, Table O2 outlines level 2 coding by linking level 1 categories to new concepts, and Table O3 outlines the third level of coding by linking level 2 categories to deeper conceptualizations.

Table O1

Concepts and Codes for Level 1.

Concepts and Codes for Level 1 Coding.

Level 1 concepts not requiring level 2 analysis:

Traditions: Where participants describe a cultural traditions (societal or within school) [new].

Opportunities Men: Where participants describe/respond to career opportunities for men based on gender.

Opportunities General: General opportunities for all primary teachers.

Challenges Men: Where participants describe/respond to career challenges for men based on gender.

Challenges General: General challenges for all primary teachers

Level 1 concepts requiring level 2 analysis:

Parental Perspectives: Where participants describe interactions or conversations with parents.

Performance: Expressed views related to hiring or promotion based on performance vs. gender.

Fatherhood: Where participants describe how being fathers affected their teaching.

Gender Stereotyping: Where participants describe or demonstrate gender stereotyping.

Reflexivity: Where reflexive influences emerge from the transcripts [new].

Tasking: Where participants describe and respond to the notion of gender specific tasks within buildings..

Workplace: Where participants described general workplace experiences.

Professional Relationships: Where participants described their professional relationships in schools.

Socializing: Where participants described socializing at work.

Daily Routines: Where participants described their daily routines within their workspace [new].

Demonstrating Care: Where participants described how they demonstrated care towards students.

Role Modelling: Where participants respond to or describe notions of role modelling.

Becoming: Where participants describe how they came to be a teacher.

Attending to: Where participants described how they experienced ‘attending to’ in teaching.

Note: Level 1 codes are bolded and followed by definitions.

Table O2

Concepts and Codes for Level 2.

<i>Level 2 Coding Linked to Level 1 Concepts</i>
<p>Parental Perspectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming: Where parents welcome male primary teachers. • Conflicted: Where parents express concern over male primary teachers. • Reinforced Stereotypes: Where parents reinforce gender stereotyping through conversations with participants. <p>Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance over Being: Participants expressed desire to be hired/promoted based on job performance. • Performance but Qualified: Participants expressed desire to be hired/promoted based on job performance but welcomed the possibility that their gender could enhance their career ambitions. • So Be It: Embraced gender as a factor for career ambitions without qualification. <p>Fatherhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Teaching: Where participants described how being a father enhanced their teaching. • Complicated Teaching: Where participants described how being a father complicated their teaching. <p>Gender Stereotyping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcing Stereotypes: Where participants themselves reinforced gender stereotypes. • Experienced Stereotypes: Where participants experienced stereotyping. • New Stereotypes: Participants described new stereotyping that may be in the literature review [new]. <p>Reflexivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided: Where reflective influences may have emerged as the researcher guided participant towards specific topic or issue. • Self-Demonstrated: Participant, through his words, outlined reflexive influences. • Dialogic: Through conversation with researcher, participant was influenced by reflexivity. <p>Tasking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Examples: Where participants shared specific examples. • Positive Attitudes: Where participants expressed positive feelings about gender specific tasks. • Negative Attitudes: Where participants expressed negative feelings about gender specific tasks. • Neutral Attitudes: Where participants expressed neutral feelings about gender specific tasks. <p>Workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable: Where participants seemed very comfortable in their workspace. • Uncomfortable: Where participants seemed at times uncomfortable in their workspace. • Hostile: Where participants described and experience that could be described as a very negative workplace experience. <p>Professional Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive: Where participants experienced ‘very’ supportive professional relationships. • Neutral & Professional: Where participants experienced neutral or commonly professional relationships. • Conflicted: Where participants described situations where they had conflicted relationships with other staff members (may or not be linked to gender stereotyping). <p>Socializing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Socializing Tendencies: Described socializing with other staff members within schools. • Isolating: Described situations where isolation from other staff members occurs, or described feelings regarding being isolated as a primary teacher.

Continued

Table O2

Level 2 Coding Linked to Level 1 Concepts

Daily Routines:

- **Hindering Routines:** Described routines that hindered a staff member's ability to socialize.
- **Facilitating Routines:** Described routines that facilitated socializing with other staff members.

Demonstrating Care:

- **Active Hugging:** Where participants initiated hugging with students when a need arose.
- **Receptive to Hugs:** Where participants explained that they have no qualms about receiving hugs from students when appropriate.
- **Avoiding Hugs:** Where participants made an effort to avoid hugging students.
- **Soft Skill Suggesting Building:** Where participants described demonstrating care for students through ongoing relationship building and mutual respect.
- **Examples of:** Where participants provided specific examples of how to show care through ongoing relationship building and through mutual respect.
- **Troubling Notions:** Where participants explained, regardless of their views on hugging, troubling notions related to physical contact between teacher and student.
- **Combo:** Where participants described some combination of the above aspects of demonstrating care.

Role Modelling:

- **Cited Challenges:** Where participants expressed concerns over being a role model.
- **Role Modelling Welcomed:** Where participants welcomed the idea of being a role model.
- **Shared Neutral Story:** Where participants shared an experience related to role modelling in general.

Becoming:

- **Subtle Discouragement:** Where participants experienced subtle discouragement from entering primary teaching.
- **Explicit Discouragement:** Where participants experiences explicit or direct discouragement from entering primary teaching.
- **Gestures of Support:** Where participant describes support they received in their journey to becoming a primary teacher.
- **Primary as Original Goal:** Where participants explained primary teaching as their original goal.
- **People as Motivation:** Where participants described other people as a motivating factor influencing their decision to enter primary teaching.
- **Transitional Motivators:** Where participants explained how their decision to enter primary teaching emerged as a result of life transitions.
- **Early Influences:** Where participants explained how their decision to enter primary teaching was made at an early age.
- **2nd Career Choice:** Where participants explained that primary teaching was not their first career choice.

Attending to:

- **Received:** Was 'attended to' (as described in literature review) by a female teacher.
- **Outward:** 'Attended to' (as described in literature review) a female teacher [new].

Note: This table illustrates the level 2 codes and concepts used in this study and show how they are linked to level 1 concepts. (Level 2 codes are set off by bullet lists and in bold – descriptors are included).

Table O3.

Concepts and Codes for Level 3

Level 3 Coding Linked to Level 2 Concepts

(level 3 codes are set off by bullets and are in bold – descriptors are included).

General Socializing Tendencies:

- **Socializing Effected By Routines:** Where participants described a socializing experience that was either positively or negatively affected by daily routines; linked to hindering and facilitating routines.
- **Affirmed Importance Of:** Where participants described the importance of socializing within schools.
- **Who We Soc. With:** Where participants specifically explained who they socialize with.

Isolating:

- **Isolated by Consequence:** Where participant describes how they became isolated by factors outside of their control, often due to daily routines, linked to ‘Socializing Effected by Routines’ and to ‘Hindering routines’ concepts.
 - **To Escape or to Refuel:** Where participants described how they purposely isolated themselves to escape or to refuel.
 - **Not Bothered:** Where participants described how they were not bothered by isolating nature of being a man in a primary school.
 - **Bothered:** Where participants described how they were bothered by isolating nature of being a man in a primary school.
 - **Seeking Companionship:** Male teachers who described a desire to have more men on staff, sometimes linked to reinforcing gender stereotypes.
-

Note: This table illustrates the level 3 codes and concepts used in this study and show how they are linked to level 2 concepts.

Appendix P

Follow-Up Conversation Coding

Codes for

Initial Interpretation of Reactions

Where participants ...

Not worrisome	communicated that they were not worried by content in the excerpt.
Agreed	communicated that they agreed with the content in the excerpt.
Disagreed	communicated that they disagreed with the content in the excerpt.
Debated	verbally debated an issue found within the content of the excerpt.
Experienced	experienced an event as described in the excerpt.
Observed	observed an event as described in the excerpt.

The following codes relate to reflexivity:

Where participants...

"I thought about that"	stated the phrase "I thought about that."
"Need to Think"	stated the phrase "Need to Think"
"Never Thought"	stated the phrase "Never Thought"
"Makes You Think"	stated the phrase "Makes You Think"
Reflexivity Experienced	experienced reflexivity and communicated that experience.
Predictable Reflexivity	will likely experience reflexive influence. This is based on the interpretations of the participants' reactions and/or words.

Participant reactions were also given an code that represents their overall reaction to the excerpt, coded:

Where participants...

Positive	reacted positively to the excerpt's content.
Negative	reacted negatively to the excerpt's content.
Neutral	had neither a positive or negative reaction to the excerpt's content.
Surprised	were surprised by the excerpt's content.

Appendix Q

Participants' Quoted in the Presentation of the Findings

This appendix lists the number of times each participant was quoted in the presentation of the initial interview findings sections of this study. It should be acknowledged that even though some participants were quoted more than others this does not mean their contributions were less valued. ALL participants contributed to the quantification of the findings and their messages are included in the data that informed the study's conclusions.

16	Charlie*
11	Alex
10	Morgan
10	Don
8	Jordan
8	Joe
8	Sid
8	Riley
8	Casey
7	Gerry
7	Sam
6	Jamie
4	Robin

*Charlie was quoted most often because his words most often presented clear and interesting descriptions which clearly connected to related concepts. His particular situation lent itself well to this study due to the very nature of his career path – having started out as a high school teacher and then becoming a primary teacher mid-way through his career.

Appendix R

Poetry and Coded Poems

The figures below contain individual poems and display how each poem is coded. Coding levels are shown using block arrows for example the first figure (Figure R1) shows how a poem was first coded as a poem about demonstrating care and then, as indicated by the arrow, about troubling notions about care. Third level codes are denoted using additional block arrows. Sometimes poems (or some of the content with the poems) were only coded using first level coding, in such cases arrows will not appear.

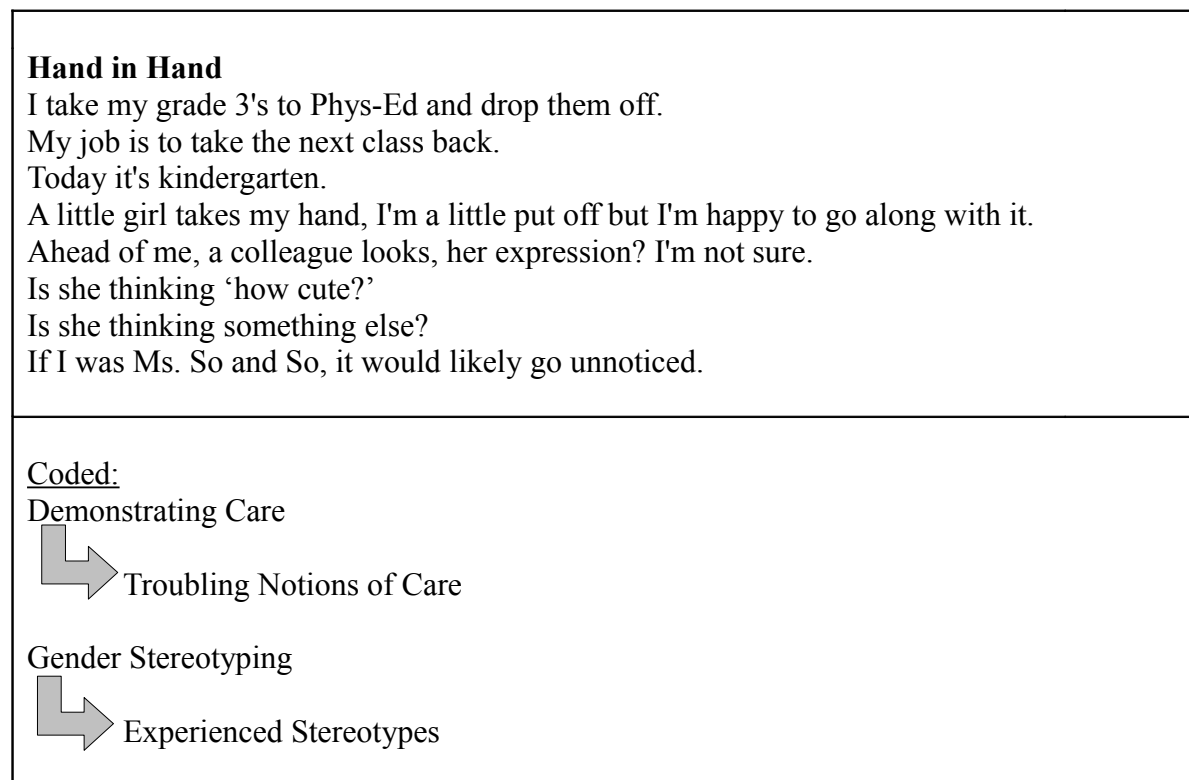


Figure R1. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Hand in Hand* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Happy Bracelet

The day after, I,
in private frustration with veins shuttering, mutter:
I hate my job, I hate my job, I hate my job.

That following day she, while the other kids readied their day,
pulled me aside.

"It's a bracelet, it's for you."

"I made it at youth group, it will make you happy."

I didn't know what to say, did she see it all unfold yesterday or did I show it.

It was a simple 5 beaded bracelet.

She explained...

"One for sin."

"One for sacrifice."

"One for resurrection."

"One for peace."

"Last one for happiness."

A small gesture from an amazing little person.

I hold it close.

It reminds me that some things are more important than others.

It has taught me how to...

It reminds me how to...

Care

Coded:

Demonstrating Care



Care Through Relationship Building &
Examples of Care

Figure R2. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Happy Bracelet* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Parachute

Out of the corner of my eye I see it.
Down the hall, past the big room, through the doors it approaches.
And then it is upon me; advice.

Advice I don't think I need. Advice I don't think I want.
Advice at least not in this form. Parachuted in, as if I am in need of rescuing.
What do you know?
I answered your question.
Why would you assume something else. You haven't set foot inside in months.
No thank you, your ideas, this time, are wasted.
Your suggestion, I find hurtful.
I will approach this topic on my own.

"I'm here to help"
That is what you said.
Advice? My turn!
Review your job description!
Your ideas cause me stress.
Cause discomfort in my chest and I can't accept.
You are here, I know, to help elsewhere.
Yet you seem to only judge.

My battle, the current challenge is one I will not share with you.
This mountain, which I love to climb, is one for me.
One for me to share with whom I choose.
Your advice seems smug, off-target, I say "flag on the play."

Coded:

Professional Relationships

 Conflicted

Attending to

 Received

Figure R3. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Parachute* and displays the coding used for that poem.

What if?

What if I could truly run my room like I truly
want?

What if I could shake up this ship and still
meet up with them in the end?

What if I didn't have to fit this mold?

What if I could teach as if I were to learn?


Why do I expect me to be them?

Coded:

Professional Relationships

 Conflicted

Gender Stereotyping

 Experienced Stereotyping

Attending to

 Received

Figure R4. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *What If?* and displays the coding used for that poem.

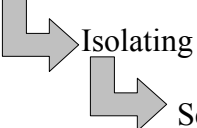
<p>Welcome</p> <p>I walk in and say my quick hellos. Snap a quick joke here and there. Tuck down my hall and into my room. I sit and think. I sit and think about the game, the news, and the beauty on last night's 'guy show.' I don't talk about it, I think. There's no one to shoot the shit with here. Silly? Maybe? Reality.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Socializing</p> <p> Isolating Seeking Companionship</p>

Figure R5. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Welcome* and displays the coding used for that poem.


Token Male 2

Am I a token male?
I mean that's what they say
"...the school has it's male."
"...it's good for the students."
"...it's good for the students to see a male role model."

But what about teaching?
Am I not a good teacher?
Shouldn't the school simply have teachers?
Shouldn't the school have a teacher that's good for the students.
Shouldn't the students have good role models period?

Coded:

Performance

 Performance over Being

Role Modelling

 Role Modelling Welcomed

Figure R6. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Token Male 2* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Beauty in a Basket

Staff Appreciation Week

I am very much appreciative of the staffroom meals and cards.

I thank the parents for pulling it all together.

Then as I write this very poem, something else happens.

I'm struck by the coincidence.

At that moment I have just completed the first three lines, still titleless.

I am handed a carnation.

Two small moments, my first three lines and then the carnation.

Both relatively insignificant but curiously noteworthy.

One carnation for each staff member.

I know it's the gesture that counts and I really do appreciate it too.

But I can sense even their awkwardness as they hand it to me.

We laugh and make lite of the situation - we share a little joke.

but...

It is something, It doesn't bother me but it might someone else.

The next day the grand prize draw for the staff appreciation raffle.

My name doesn't come out of the hat.

I've missed my shot at the basket full of beauty products.

Coded:

Gender Stereotyping



Experienced Stereotyping

Professional Relationships



Supportive

Parental Perspective



Welcoming

Workspace



Uncomfortable

Figure R7. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Beauty in a Basket* and displays the coding used for that poem.

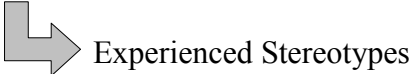
<p>My Neighbour</p> <p>I've met my neighbour once. He seems nice. In casual conversation, I learned his girls go to my school. He, in turn, learned I am a grade 1 teacher at their school. We haven't really talked since.</p> <p>Is it because... of coincidence with nothing more to it? he thinks I'm some sort of creep? of the party my step daughter threw?</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Gender Stereotypes</p> <p> Experienced Stereotypes</p> <p>Reflexivity</p>

Figure R8. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *My Neighbour* and displays the coding used for that poem.

<p>Odd Ball?</p> <p>In September I thought I was cool, part of the crowd, 'in' I read <i>The Right Kind of Man</i> <u>Now I ask, am I an odd ball?</u></p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Reflexivity</p>

Figure R9. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Odd Ball?* and displays the coding used for that poem.


<p>Class Profile</p> <p>Every year we do a class profile. List all those who are serviced...</p> <p>Counseling EAL ENIP Resource Reading Recovery...</p> <p>...Reading Recovery: 6. 6?</p> <p>Seems a high number? What do they think? Am I, in their eyes, one of those? One of those needing taken care of?</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Attending To</p> <p>Received</p> <p>Reflexivity</p> <p>Challenges Men</p>

Figure R10. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Class Profile* and displays the coding used for that poem.

<p>My Classroom</p> <p>In my classroom I am always the only adult. I rarely have EA's or admin.</p> <p>I forget the last time I had constructive feedback. I don't remember the last time I've been evaluated... in another school maybe?</p> <p>Perhaps I should check my file.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u></p> <p>Challenges Men</p> <p>Reflexivity</p>

Figure R11. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *My Classroom* and displays the coding used for that poem.

<p>Up You Go</p> <p>It's Friday, a tricky day is underway. Lots planned, heavy on the management side. Knock on door. "Can I borrow your teacher?" In the hall, pulled aside I learn of my future. I'm very happy, I'm where I want to be. But I know my Grade 1 assignment is ending. I learn I'm upstairs with the Grade 3's. I wonder... other than the staffing numbers is there more to my reassignment.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u></p> <p>Challenges Men</p> <p>Reflexivity</p>

Figure R12. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Up You Go* and displays the coding used for that poem.


<p>Big Sugar, Sloan, Sandbox, and The Skydiggers</p> <p>In a previous life I rubbed shoulders with Canadianna rockers. I filled their riders, roadied, and built their stages.</p> <p>That 8 channel soundboard blaring feedback throughout our gym. Well I could handle it. I managed 64 channel boards with phantom power and preamps. I've deafened amateurs who demanded 'more monitor'</p> <p>That was another life. Should I just stand up and move their speakers just a foot forward? Would they let me? Would they assume, because I am a man, I am a technician. Would, in volunteering, reinforce a stereotype or be appreciated.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u></p> <p>Gender Stereotyping</p> <p> Reinforcing</p> <p>Reflexivity</p>

Figure R13. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Big Sugar, Sloan, Sandbox, and The Skydiggers* and displays the coding used for that poem.


<p>Sex Ed.</p> <p>Sex Ed? By default, I teach it...</p> <p>Women are not supposed to teach the boys, it's an extra class in June.</p> <p>I don't mind, the boys enjoy it, they'd rather this than algebra in June.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Tasking</p> <p> Specific Examples & Positive Attitudes</p>

Figure R14. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Sex Ed.* and displays the coding used for that poem.

<p>Dressing Room # 8</p> <p>Off the ice late, lots of whistles, the clock went slowly.</p> <p>After the game: I drive a beer into me, hustle my gear into my bag.</p> <p>“What’s your rush?”</p> <p>“20 six-year-olds rushing at me in the morning is my rush”</p> <p>“How hard can it be? Give them a toy and teach the ABC’s!”</p> <p>With that the door closes behind me.</p> <p>Laughter fades and is replaced by the hum of the Zamboni.</p> <p>It’s late, tomorrow is going to come too soon.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">They partied on.</p>	<p><u>Coded:</u></p>
<p><u>Coded:</u> Challenges General</p>	

Figure R15. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Dressing Room # 8* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Side Tackle

I hug my students everyday.
Not all of them, some are not huggers.
One insists on a handshake.
There are a few that love to give a hug at the end of the day.
But
I've a new move.
They zig? I zag.

I use this strategy to protect myself,
this is only a recent thing though – an upshot of my increasing awareness.

It's called the side hug.
Looks as if the little 'Ruggers' are side tackling.
It works, it's a tweak, I'm more comfortable.

They get their hug.

Coded:

Reflexivity

Demonstrating Care



Examples of
Troubling Notions

Figure R16. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Side Tackle* and displays the coding used for that poem.


<p>Token Male 1</p> <p>Summer vacation, Beach bound, book in hand. Stop for gas and snacks. In line, a familiar face, She got me my first job, I'm excited to say hi, catch up.</p> <p>"Oh you're not in Montague?" she asks... "Hey! She got her male."</p> <p>I give my friendly, yet not entirely with you, laugh I pay, wave, smile. "Enjoy your summer" I say.</p> <p>Somersaulting in the gulf. Bocce on the beach. Sand trapped between pages. It's on my mind.</p>
<p><u>Coded:</u></p> <p>Performance</p> <p> Performance of Being</p> <p>Reflexivity</p>

Figure R17. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Token Male 1* and displays the coding used for that poem.

The View

We chat and laugh.

“You must be learning so much about your wife with us?”

“Yeah, it’s just like The View here!”

“You’re doing well to put up with us everyday...

but we do need more of you...

the children need more men in these halls,

they need to see role models.”

I’m happy.

I’m comfortable with that, and I agree...

Then I get into this research thing, and I worry...

What am I really teaching them?

What role do you want me to model?

What modeling am I doing?

And I wish I could have 8 years of teaching back.

Coded:

Role Modelling



Cited Challenges

Stereotyping



Reinforcing

Reflexivity

Figure R18. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *The View* and displays the coding used for that poem.

TV Teacher

Getting ready for work, on the TV I see 'another.'
Some PD broadcast, maybe distance education. Topic: Guided Reading.
Unusual I think, he's doing a good job but not quite like Fountas & Pinnell
Then, I think something else...a small twinge...

How gay is that!
Do I sound and look that way?

I've surprised myself.


What did I just think? Did I say it out loud?

Because I am aware of the research I am ashamed...
Because it's wrong I am ashamed...

but it's true I don't want to 'show' that way.
I am caught.
I, in thinking, demonstrate what others wrongly think.
I, in thinking, wish to portray differently, to change what they may think.

Coded:

Stereotyping

 Reinforcing

Reflexivity

Challenges Men

Figure R19. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *TV Teacher* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Truck Play

I get ready to go to the grocery store.
I'm taking my 21 month old.
He wants to play instead of being belted in.
While parked I let him play.
He loves the controls up front.
He grabs and turns and pushes and pulls.
He's just playing but
It is our new truck and those levers are plastic.
I tell him, maybe a bit animated, NO!
He looks, grins, laughs, and does it again.
I need to remind myself to ignore this and not respond.
I need to be animated on the positives.
I remind myself I should do this with my class.

Coded:

Fatherhood



Enhancing Teaching

Figure R20. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Truck Play* and displays the coding used for that poem.

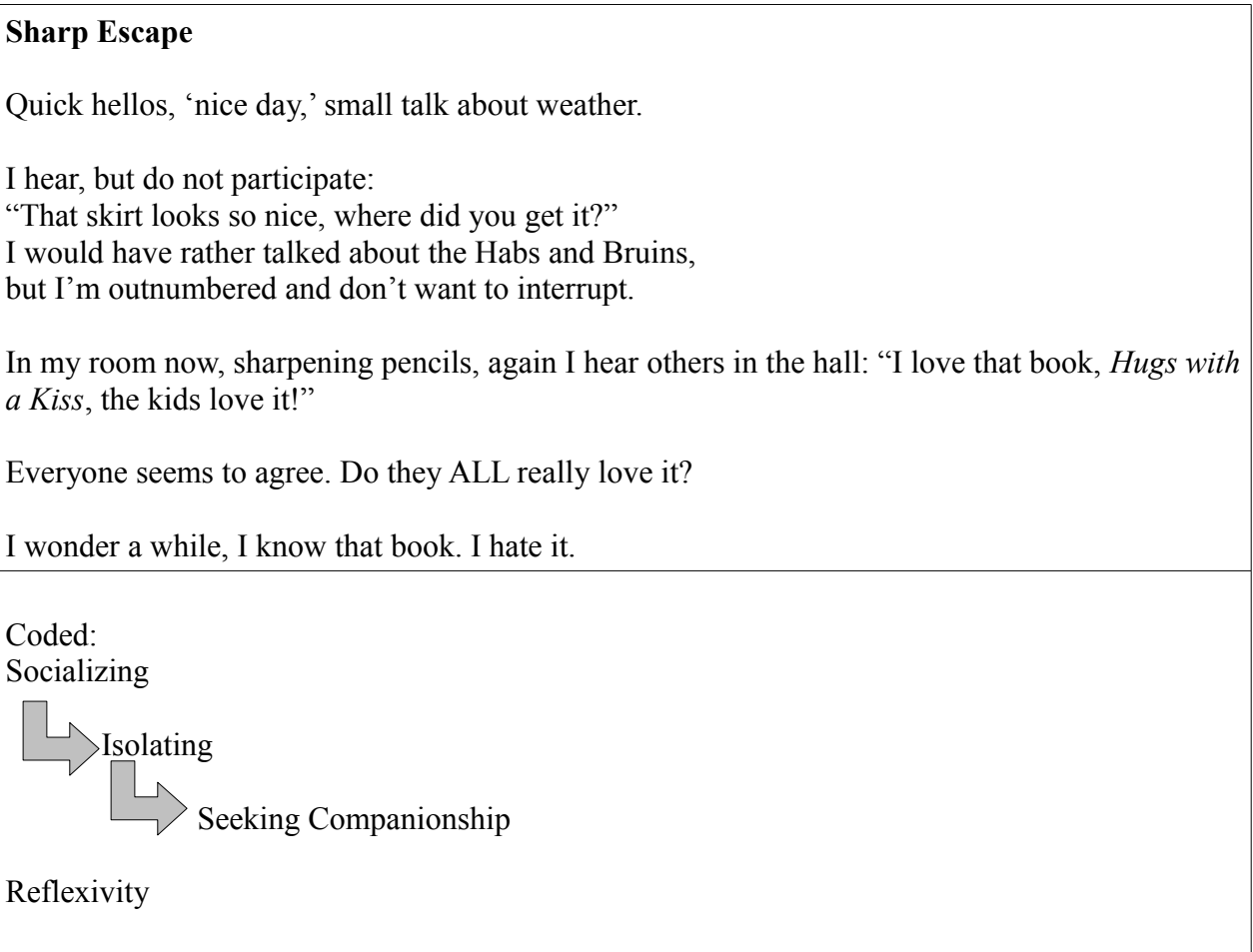


Figure R21. Poem and poem coding. This figure presents the poem: *Sharp Escape* and displays the coding used for that poem.

Appendix S

Findings Statements Listed and Assigned Percentage Value.

- 86% Twelve participants clearly described how other people supported their decision to enter teaching at the K-3 level. Much of this support originated from family members and close friends and in some cases other teachers offered support.
- 86% Twelve participants described ongoing relationship building through mutual respect as their means to demonstrate care towards their students.
- 86% Twelve participants identified common challenges - challenges that could be encountered by all primary teachers.
- 86% Twelve participants believed they were hired or should be hired on merit - because of qualifications or job performance.
- 78% Eleven participants described their professional relationships with their colleagues as consistently positive, having very little to share that would suggest negative working relationships with colleagues.
- 71% Ten participants described situations where their decisions were made during transitional phases of their lives: Either following high school, during post-secondary study, or during the years that immediately followed their post-secondary study.
- 71% Ten participants welcomed the idea of being a male role model and felt unburdened by 'added pressure' associated with role modelling responsibilities.
- 64% Despite the prevalence of transitional influences nine participants also described how there were early life influences that informed their decision to enter primary teaching
- 64% Nine participants commented on potential opportunities for men as primary

teachers.

- 64% Nine participants in this study described situations where stereotyping existed.
- 64% For nine participants stereotypical views manifested themselves as what some researchers call “manly” tasks – tasks assigned to men working within primary schools.
- 64% Nine participants described their overall workplace experience as positive and comfortable.
- 57% Eight participants described how primary teaching was a secondary career choice.
- 57% Eight participants shed insight into their daily routines and how it related to their social tendencies on staff. In some cases these routines facilitated socializing and in other cases these routines hindered socializing.
- 57% Eight participants expressed views about the need for more male teachers at the primary level.
- 57% Eight participants demonstrated how they themselves reinforced stereotypes through the content of the narratives they shared or directly through stated beliefs.
- 42% Six participants described situations where they experienced subtle or implicit discouragement related to their decisions to enter teaching at the K-3 level.
- 42% Six participants describe challenges that they felt were due to the fact that they are men teaching at the k-3 level.
- 36% Five participants in this study affirmed the importance of socializing with their peers within their primary settings.
- 36% Five participants suggested that teaching at this level was not an isolating experience or if it was isolating it was not something that bothered them.

- 36% Five participants, discussed how other people suggested that they would be presented with opportunities because of their gender.
- 36% Five participants embraced gender 'tasking' and see no harm in it.
- 29% Four participants shared experiences where they were stereotyped by other people.
- 29% Four participants clearly described themselves as being someone who tries to avoid hugging students.
- 29% Four participants described themselves, as receivers of hugs; where they would hug their students when one was delivered by their students.
- 29% Four participants offered a personal glimpse into their family life and explained how fatherhood has affected their teaching. These men explained that, depending on the individual, fatherhood enhanced (2) or complicated (1) their teaching.
- 29% Four men described situations where discomfort existed.
- 21% Three participants highlighted certain individuals who in some way positively influenced their decision to enter primary teaching.
- 21% Three participants described situations where they took deliberate steps to isolate themselves from other teachers.
- 21% Three participants, who seemed quite neutral on ways to demonstrate care, offered perspectives that highlight ongoing concerns regarding hugging students.
- 21% Three participants did not welcome the idea of being a role model.
- 14% Two participants described situations where one teacher, in questioning aspects of another teachers' teaching, 'meddled' with or 'attended to' that other teacher. It should be noted that this idea of being attended to was both experienced by men and delivered by men and was

not always related to gender.

- 14% Two participants experienced explicit discouragement from entering teaching period.
- 14% Two participants described how primary teaching was their original career choice.
- 14% Two participants shared the dangers associated with hugging students as a justification for not actively giving out hugs to their students.
- 14% Parents also exhibited stereotyping regarding male primary teachers as described by two participants.
- 14% Two participants described themselves as being forthcoming with hugs a means to demonstrate care.
- 14% Two participants described how they made an effort to socialize with other men on staff.
- 7% One participant may have experienced reflexive influences as a result of the wording of some questions or through the wording of some material such as the debriefing script.
- 7% One participant described occasion was bothered by the fact that he was assigned tasks out of stereotyping.